UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.14/PSD.1/28
E/CN.14/740
2 April 1980

ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

First session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers

Addis Ababa, 24 March - 2 April 1980

Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole

Addis Ababa, 3 - 8 April 1980

Fifteenth session of the Commission
Sixth Meeting of the Conference of Ministers

Addis Ababa, 9 - 12 April 1980

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE

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A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Opening and duration of session

1. The first session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers was held at ECA headquarters, Addis Ababa, from 24 March to 2 April 1980. The meeting was opened by the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa.

Attendance

2. The session was attended by representatives of the following member States of the Commission: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cape-Verde, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Swaziland, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Zaire and Zambia.

3. The following member States of the United Nations were represented by observers: Canada, Federal Republic of Germany, France, United Kingdom, Union of Soviet Socialist Republic, United States of America and Sweden.

4. Representatives of the United Nations Statistical Office, Population Division, Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (HABITAT) and the United Nations Sahelian Office (UNSO).

5. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) were represented. The session was attended by representatives of the following specialized agencies: International Labour Organization (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and World Health Organization (WHO).

6. The following inter-governmental bodies were represented: African Development Bank (ADB), Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), European Economic Community (EEC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Institute of Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), Kano River Union, Organization of African Unity, Organisation Commune Africaine et Mauricien (OCAM) and Union Douaniére et Economique de l'Afrique Centrale (UDEAC).

7. Observers were present from the Institut Africain et Mauricien de statistique et d'economie appliquée (I.A.M.S.E.A.), Kigali, the Institut de formation et de recherche demographiques (IFORD), Yaoundé, the Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics (ISAE), Kampala, the Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques (INSEE), Paris, the International Statistical Institute (ISI), the Institut de statistique, de planification et d'economie appliquée (ISPEA), Yaoundé, the Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS), Legon, the Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research (ISSER), University of Ghana, the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER), University of Ibadan, the World Fertility Survey (WFS) and the Population Council.

Election of Officers

8. Mr. Philip G. Gadegbeku (Liberia) was elected Chairman of the Joint Conference, with Mr. Abdelhamid Abouchouker (Morocco) and Mr. Silas Niyibizi (Rwanda) as first and second Vice-Chairmen and Mr. Parmeet Singh (Kenya) as Rapporteur.

B. AGENDA

9. On 24 March, the Conference adopted the following agenda:

Plenary Meeting

1. Opening address
2. Election of officers
3. Adoption of the agenda
4. Matters arising from the fifth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers:
   (a) Terms of reference of the Joint Conference
   (b) Data requirements of the African Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade
   (c) Pan-African Documentation and Information System
5. Matters arising from the last sessions of the Conferences of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers
6. Other inter-disciplinary topics:
   (a) African Household Survey Capability Programme (AHSCP)
   (b) Selected Social Indicators of relevance to Africa

   Additional item: Preliminary discussion of Agenda item 8.

Planning Committee

7. Election of officers
8. Quantitative Analysis of the Problems and Perspectives of African Developing Countries in the framework of the Third United Nations Development Decade:
   (a) Perspectives of the African Region in the 1980s and Policy Implications
   (b) Comparative Analysis of the Projections made for Developing African Countries by various United Nations Agencies
9. Institute for Development and Economic Planning (IDEP)
10. Programme of Work in Development Planning, Projections and Policies

Statistics Committee

11. Election of officers

12. Statistical Development:

(a) Report on ECA Statistical Activities

(b) Statistical Organization

(c) Report on the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA)

(d) Co-ordination of Technical Assistance for African Statistical Development

(e) Data Processing

13. Economic Statistics:

(a) The Status and Uses of the UN System of National Accounts in Africa

(b) Working Group on Price Statistics

(c) External Trade Statistics

(d) Seminar on Distribution Statistics

(e) Industry and Construction Statistics

(f) Other Economic Statistics

14. Programme of Work in Statistics

Demography Committee

15. Election of officers

16. Matters arising from other United Nations meetings

17. Report on ECA Population Activities, 1978:

(a) Studies

(b) Information Service and Clearing House Activities

(c) Training and Research

(d) Advisory Services

(e) Regional Co-ordination

18. Programme of Work in Population

Planning and Demography (Joint Committee Meeting)

19. Population in Development Planning in Africa

Statistics and Demography (Joint Committee Meeting)

20. Demographic and Social Statistics and Analysis:

(a) 1980 Population and Housing Censuses

(b) Other Data Collection and Analysis, including the World Fertility Survey

Plenary Meeting

21. Verbal Reports by Chairmen of Committee Meetings

22. Proposals for submission to the forthcoming African Economic Summit through the Conference of Ministers

23. Other business

24. Consideration of the Draft Provisional Agenda for the Second session of the Joint Conference

25. Report of the Joint Conference to the ECA Conference of Ministers

C. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS - FIRST PLENARY MEETING

Opening Address

10. The session was opened by Mr. Adebayo Adedeji, ECA Executive Secretary, who welcomed participants and outlined the administrative arrangements made for the first session of the new Joint Conference. He then turned to matters of substance which included a review of bleak African prospects in the context of the world economic situation. The 1980s would be a period of particular difficulty for the Region unless it could begin to overcome basic weaknesses in unbalanced specialization in production, lack of integration in national economic activity particularly between farm and non-farm sectors and dependence on imports for capital formation. In this situation he emphasized the growth of African population and labour force as a factor requiring special consideration.

11. Mr. Adedeji suggested that solutions to current African problems should concentrate on better utilization of natural resources, which would require special efforts in the fields of training and the deployment of labour force. Action along these lines called for support for entrepreneurial activity and introduction of appropriate technology, organized in the context of appropriate policies for capital formation. Two other problems to which he drew special attention were inflation and inequitable income distribution.

12. Among the measures which he specified for a regional response to its economic and social situation were a better understanding of population dynamics, inventories of natural resources, evaluation of inputs available for development projects, the adoption of a unified approach to planning, better monitoring of aid flows and other external transactions, improved internal communication between agencies responsible for development at national and sub-national levels, all of which implied the need for national programming and adequate support services.

13. The basic need for effective operations along these lines was improved and more up-to-date information. In this connexion Mr. Adedeji particularly mentioned national accounts, information expected from the African Household Survey Capability Programme and the more gradual co-ordination of and access to all available information through the African Data Bank.

14. The Executive Secretary expressed the hope that the first session of the Joint Conference would initiate better technical and practical co-ordination of the various national and international agencies participating in the meeting. He finally expressed the hope that the agenda items dealing with development perspectives, population factors in development planning, and demographic and social statistics and analysis could be considered during the plenary meeting.

Matters arising from the fifth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers (Agenda item 4)

(a) Terms of reference of the Joint Conference

15. The document E/CN.14/PSD.1/1, "Draft terms of reference for the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers" was introduced. It was pointed out that that draft which resulted from the merging of the former conference of African Planners, African Statisticians and African Demographers as approved by the Conference of Ministers' Resolution 360 (XIV) was consistent with and incorporated whatever terms of reference existed relating to those conferences. It was simple, general and comprehensive so as to encompass whatever concerns the Joint Conference might have, and it provided for flexible working arrangements.

16. After lengthy deliberations, certain amendments were made and the revised draft terms of reference were adopted as provisional, to be modified if and when necessary, as follows:

1. The Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers, acting within the framework of the policies and procedures of the United Nations and subject to the general supervision of the Economic Commission for Africa, shall, provided that the Conference takes no action with respect to any country without the agreement of the Government of that country:

(a) Serve as a forum for examining progress and problems in the fields of African planning, statistics and population and take action to ensure their development in the light of the general principles of self-reliance and technical co-operation among countries of the region;

(b) Establish arrangements for the improvement of all aspects of methodology and practice in the three fields under African conditions;

(c) Co-ordinate the training programmes for and promote the training of the necessary African personnel in planning, statistics and demography 1/;

(d) Collaborate with the secretariat in evaluating economic, social and demographic conditions in the region to assist in formulating appropriate strategies and monitoring their implementation;

(e) Conduct its operations in collaboration with other relevant bodies and international agencies.

1/ This includes the functions requested in the statutes of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) which shall be exercised by the Committee of Planners established in paragraph 4 of the Terms of Reference.

2. The members of the Conference shall be the government officials in charge of the national planning, statistical and population agencies of the member States of the Economic Commission for Africa, or their representatives. Representation of all other Governments and bodies shall follow the same rules as for sessions of the Economic Commission for Africa.

3. The Conference shall meet once every two years, with its first session being held in 1980, and shall report on its sessions to the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa.

4. Work at sessions of the Conference shall be organized in plenary meetings and in committees. A joint report on plenary and committee meetings shall be agreed at a final plenary meeting of each session of the Conference.

5. At the beginning of each session, the Conference shall elect a Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur. At the beginning of its meeting each Committee shall appoint its Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur.

6. Member States and agencies shall bear the cost of their attendance at the sessions of the Conference.

7. Except as provided for herein, the Rules of Procedure of the Economic Commission for Africa shall, where relevant, apply to the sessions of the Conference.

(b) Data Requirements of the African Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade

17. In introducing the document entitled "African Data Requirements in the 1980s", (E/CN.14/PSD.1/2), a representative of the secretariat referred to extracts from the summaries of statements made by the Executive Secretaries of ECE, ESCAP and ECA in the general debate of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the New International Strategy in 1979 and drew attention to the principal focus and modalities of this new strategy. In view of their relative importance, he laid stress on data required for energy, food production and distribution, integrated demographic, social and economic data on households and household members, data specially relevant for international co-operation such as international trade, transport and communications and migration and some information on the environment. He also stressed the importance of national accounts as a means of aggregating and co-ordinating statistical data. Finally he emphasized the importance of analysis and use of data for planning purposes.

18. In the discussions which followed several participants pointed out data gaps which in their view had either not been dealt with at all in the paper or not sufficiently emphasized. These included volume and structure of internal trade, income statistics, development of renewable energy, activities in the informal sector, small area statistics, sex differentials in measuring contributions in activities in different sectors.

19. It was also stressed in connexion with small area statistics that many African countries now require a sub-national level of disaggregation in basic data because of the emphasis on planning from "below", with the district as the level of disaggregation. The background paper should therefore in identifying data needs at the national level have focussed also on district and regional statistics.

25. Special attention should also have been paid to the needs of specific areas. For example, there are data needs which are peculiar to the Sahel which should have been highlighted. In such areas, the locations of water sources constitute basic data needs.

21. In connexion with concepts, definitions and classifications, some participants were of the view that the background paper was written on the underlying assumptions that African economies operate only on the basis of modern or market economies and that some thought should have been given to the informal sectors in African economies.

22. With respect to the content of the paper, some participants also suggested that some reference should have been made to the basic needs strategy and the relevant data required to answer questions on these needs.

23. Finally, participants wanted to know whether the data listed in the paper responded to the development strategies of the different countries and the source of funding for collecting and analysing the wide range of data suggested.

24. In summing up, the representative of the secretariat explained that questions relating to concepts, definitions and classifications would be considered again under agenda item 6 (a): The African Household Survey Capability Programme (AHSCP). With respect to district level data collected through the mechanism of household surveys, this depended on the size of the sample and the related question of the size of the field staff. It was pointed out that with a reasonable sample size, it is possible to get estimates with tolerable precision at the district level. However, with very small samples district level estimates could be misleading.

25. The representative of the secretariat also explained that activities in the informal sector together with other types of data have been fully considered in the content of the AHSCP.

26. With respect to whether the data listed sufficiently deal with the basic needs requirements as usually defined in the basic needs strategy, it was emphasized that there seems to be a shift nowadays from "basic needs" to "needs" since what may be basic in one community may not necessarily be so in another. The data requirements identified meet the needs of the African Region but will have to be made country specific in order to ensure that they respond to the development strategy of a particular country.

27. Finally with respect to funding sources, African countries themselves would have to make a substantial contribution to data collection and analysis before they can expect external aid in that direction.

(c) Pan-African Documentation and Information System

28. In introducing document E/CN.14/PSD.1/3, "The Pan-African Documentation and Information System", it was explained that that document which referred to a regional project had been for information purposes only and participants were invited to ask questions concerning that project.

29. In answer to the many questions raised it was pointed out that a decision had been taken over two years ago by the Heads of State of the Organization of African Unity to establish a regional information network and at its fifth meeting the Conference of Ministers had approved a resolution, 368 (IV), calling for the creation of a network of data banks at the regional, sub-regional and national levels. The developments which had led up to these discussions were briefly reviewed and it was explained that until it was firmly established the project would be managed by the ECA secretariat. The secretariat had been able to mobilize sufficient funds to establish it, but it was hoped that eventually it would be financed from contributions of African countries after it had established its own credibility to the extent where they would be interested in paying for its services. It was recognized that the project was ambitious and expensive and that it was likely to be faced with many problems in the course of its development.

30. There was some criticism of the project in that it represented a very sophisticated system which might be unrealistic in the light of African conditions. The opinion was expressed that since Member States would eventually be expected to participate in that project such States should be made aware of its costs and implications, when they would be expected to begin paying for the system and the level of their contributions. At this juncture other information systems in existence could be tapped and made available to ECA.

31. Nevertheless the Conference expressed the feeling that the project should have a modest beginning, and that since it provided an opportunity for filling the existing information gaps at the national level, questions of finance should not be allowed to obscure its usefulness. The data bank would eventually pay its way but due caution should be exercised so as to ensure that in the initial stages it was not over-ambitious.

Matters arising from the last sessions of the Conferences of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers (Agenda item)

32. The Conference had before it the following reports: Report of the seventh session of the Conference of African Planners, E/CN.14/717; Report of the tenth session of the Conference of African Statisticians, E/CN.14/687 and Report of the third session of the Conference of African Demographers, E/CN.14/716.

33. In introducing the agenda item, a representative of the secretariat gave a detailed account of the history and role of each of the previous Conferences of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers. He then outlined the interaction between the shortfall of statistics and analysis explaining that there-in lay the advantages for the new conference in the joint examination of needs with respect to data analysis and uses in the identification of priorities and in the establishment of more effective programmes.

34. In the ensuing discussion some delegates expressed fears that some aspects of the agenda from the Conference of African Planners like strategies for agricultural production and industrialization had not been covered and that nothing had been said on the MULPOCs (Multi-national Programming and Operational Centres). In reply, the secretariat indicated that studies on the strategies for agricultural production and industrialization were available and could be obtained from the respective Divisions. On the MULPOCs the secretariat indicated that measures for further support of at least one of them were currently under consideration.

Other inter-disciplinary topics (Agenda item 5)

(a) African Household Survey Capability Programme (AHSCP)

35. Under this agenda item, the Conference considered the background documents: Progress Report on the African Household Survey Capability Programme, E/CN.14/PSD.1/4, and the Report of the Working Group on Organization, Content and Methodology of Household Surveys, E/CN.14/PSD.1/3. In introducing the item, a representative of the secretariat traced the history of the African Household Survey Capability Programme (AHSCP) and its global version the National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP). He referred to the establishment of the regional component of AHSCP at ECA with two UNDP funded experts, an ILO funded household surveys specialist and a FAO funded agricultural statistician attached only part-time to the project. The Chief and Deputy Chief of the Statistics Division together with the Demographic Statistician (sampling) of the Regional Advisory Service in Demographic Statistics also provide substantial support to the programme.

36. The UN Statistical Office in collaboration with other UN agencies and the Regional Commissions has produced a prospectus as part of its promotional efforts to mobilize resources for the launching of the programme at the country level. The representative of the secretariat mentioned an illustrative list of the main subject fields expected to be covered in the AHSCP.

37. Finally he referred to the recommendations of the Working Group convened in October 1973 which had proposed the following work programme for the regional component of AHSCP:

(a) Preparation of survey programme documents

(b) Provision of technical advice

(c) Development of methodology for the continuing collection, processing and analysis of integrated economic, social and demographic statistics from households in collaboration with the UN and the UN specialized agencies.

38. In the discussions which followed many participants raised questions relating to project formulation and financing of country programmes. They stressed that without adequate funding there was no possibility of achieving the aims of the AHSCP.

39. The need to overcome problems of electronic data processing was specifically stressed. In this connexion, it was pointed out that it would be advantageous for survey statisticians to be given rudimentary training in data processing especially in the use of software packages. It was regretted that the proposed ECA workshop on the use of software packages in censuses and surveys had been scheduled to take place in 1980 and not earlier. It was also felt to be unfortunate that the post of ECA's regional adviser in data processing for the surveys programme was yet to be established. The representative of the secretariat agreed with the importance being attached to data processing and explained the reasons for the late establishment of the post of data processing adviser within the AHSCP. This was mainly due to budgetary constraints which were now being tackled. He also promised to examine the possibility of advancing the date for the workshop on the use of software packages.

40. The next set of questions raised related to participation in the AMICP. The criteria for selecting or identifying countries as participants in the AMICP were not clear. The need was also indicated for some clarification on the relationship between the population census and the household survey programme. Was the conduct of the former a prerequisite for the latter? In response it was pointed out that in general the ECA Statistics Division would expect a country first to carry out a census to obtain the necessary field and data processing experience and to obtain the frame for the sample surveys before the country would be considered able to participate in the AMICP. However, there may be exceptions to this general rule where the country has undertaken a number of surveys in the recent past and a suitable sampling frame exists.

41. Some participants mentioned that the views of planners on the survey component of the programme would be most valuable for the participating statisticians. In response to this latter suggestion, it was explained that planning is an inter-disciplinary process in which statisticians as well as other social scientists played a role. Ideally data should only be generated as a result of a dialogue between users and producers of data.

42. With respect to possible external assistance to the programme, the representative of the UK Overseas Development Administration stated that inspite of cuts in British overseas aid, the UK Government will support the programme to the extent possible within the limits imposed by the projected Government aid programme. Such assistance would probably be in the fields of training, use of advisers and access to the Rothamsted General Survey Programme (AGSP) software package. The representative of the USSR expressed his country's willingness to make available to ECA questionnaires and related documents on similar surveys developed and used in the USSR. Such material could be adapted for use in the AMICP. The representative of France referred to her long history of technical assistance to African countries and stated that this would continue. This assistance would continue in the form of long- and short-term technical assistants, methodological documentation and the possibility access to the IMSA software package.

43. In replying to the various comments made and questions raised during the discussions, the representative of the secretariat explained the steps to be taken by UN and ECA to mobilize financial resources for individual countries. He referred to the establishment in the UN Statistical Office of a Central Co-ordinating Unit (CCU) to be responsible for international co-ordination of the programme in all the regions with developing countries. A draft project proposal in respect of a country will be prepared by the CCU or ECA after a joint UN/ECA mission. The project proposal would then be finalised by ECA, with a copy to the CCU and the national Central Statistical Office to secure their provisional agreement. After the country's agreement the CCU will approach potential donor(s) informally. When firm donors have been identified, countries will be advised to prepare official requests to these donors. Neither the UN Statistical Office nor ECA would itself be a source of funding. The Conference then approved the Report of the Working Group on Organization, Content and Methodology of Household Surveys.

(b) Selected Social Indicators of Relevance to Africa

44. In introducing this item of the agenda a representative of the secretariat emphasized the importance of knowing about the social and economic well-being of the population, reviewed the data problems involved in the development of social indicators and proposed a minimum programme for the development of these indicators.

46. In the discussion that followed, three main topics featured namely the data collection problems of the development of social indicators, a critique of administrative records as sources of data on social indicators and their uses.

47. One delegate pointed out a problem relating to the development of social indicators, with particular reference to his personal experience in his country, namely, their validity and relevance. He argued that, at the beginning of programmes for the development of indicators, it should be ascertained whether the information generated would be acted on by policy-makers. Sometimes this is not the case. He emphasized that there were great potentials in the use of administrative records as sources for the development of social indicators partly because the financial costs of their development are relatively low, and partly because these sources provide basic information relative to the provision and distribution of social services.

48. The Conference also agreed with the low priority now assigned to the development of composite indicators in African countries. It was emphasized that lack of co-ordination was at the heart of the problem with administrative records as sources of information for the development of social indicators. In answer to a query on the content of a population census in situations where a household survey programme is also being developed, it was pointed out that the intent of the paper was enough optimal integrated development of all the various data collection mechanisms. Also with respect to the inclusion of other indicators than the ones put forward in the background paper, it was noted that the list proposed was only a minimum, and countries were at liberty to add any other subject fields according to their needs.

Quantitative analysis of the problems and perspectives of African developing countries in the framework of the Third United Nations Development Decade (Agenda item 8)

49. The following documents were introduced by a representative of the secretariat.

(a) "Perspectives of the African Region in the 1980s and Policy Implications", (E/CN.14/PSD.1/7)

(b) "Projections Results for Some Individual African Countries", (E/CN.14/PSD.1/7/Add.1)

(c) "Comparative Analysis of the Projections made for Developing African Countries by various United Nations Bodies", (E/CN.14/PSD.1/8)

(d) "Quantitative Analysis of the Problems and Perspectives of the African Least Developed Countries in the Framework of the Third United Nations Development Decade", (UN/CONF/LDC3/3)

50. The representative first recalled the decision of the last session of the former Conference of African Planners which recommended that its next session be concentrated on project 9.242.14 entitled "Problems and Perspectives of Africa in the Framework of the Third United Nations Development Decade" of the ECA work programme. He then outlined the importance of the present session which takes place at the beginning of the 1980s and just one month before the Economic Summit of the OAU. He also stressed the importance of the session which was attended by many high-level experts including the African Members of the United Nations Committee for Development Planning, namely Dr. Robert Gardiner and Prof. N.N.A. Onitiri. It was also recalled that the document presented were made in response to General Assembly resolution 32/160(XXXI) in which the regional commissions were requested to prepare studies on long-term development trends and perspectives in their respective regions.

51. The representative of the secretariat further mentioned that the documents were background papers aimed at bringing to the attention of the Conference, the main problems facing the African region, the poor performances in the 1970s and the very bleak prospects for the 1980s if past trends and policies were continued. He also provided the Conference with the results of the planned scenarios which were analysed by the ECA secretariat for three country groupings, namely (a) the major oil exporting countries, (b) the least developed countries, (c) the non-least developed and non-major-oil exporting countries. The last group was further classified into three groups on the basis of their 1970 per capita GDP.

52. It was particularly indicated that, according to this planned scenario, an over-all growth target of 7 per cent was set for the region as a whole in the 1980s with consistent targets for the main sectors namely agriculture, manufacturing, construction, energy, transport and communication and other services. It was also pointed out that in order to achieve such targets, a great effort was needed to increase domestic savings together with substantial improvements in the efficiency of investment. Also, exports should expand in the 1980s by an average annual rate of about 7.2 per cent in volume terms through, inter-alia, export promotion including the increase of intra-African trade and co-operation with developing countries in other regions. As for imports, they are projected to grow at an average annual rate of 8.2 per cent at constant prices and such a target would entail drastic measures in order to be more selective and to reduce importation of luxury and non-essential goods.

53. The representative of the secretariat also pointed out the major policy implications of the above targets which are in line with the Development Strategy for Africa for the Third Development Decade as adopted in resolution 332 (XIV) by the Fifth Meeting of the Conference of Ministers/Fourteenth Session of the Commission. It was emphasized that in order to achieve self-sufficiency in food and to make it possible for the agricultural sector to grow at an average annual rate of about 4 per cent in the 1980s, there is inter-alia an urgent need to increase investment in that sector and particularly to expedite the implementation of river basin projects in many African countries. Emphasis was also put on the necessity of establishing a sound industrial base with vertical linkages including the processing of natural resources. It was pointed out that, given the prospects in developed countries, the achievement of an over-all growth rate of 7 per cent implies that growth in developing countries in the 1980s should not be too directly linked to the growth in the developed world and that regional co-operation and also co-operation with other developing regions were necessary conditions. Finally, specific implications were suggested for groups of countries from the results of the planned scenario for these groups.

54. The participants congratulated the secretariat on the brilliant and excellent quality of the work. It was observed that the models and methods used were pertinent in the long-term and that countries could benefit from the results of the scenarios. Further it was noted that the work highlighted the statistical data problems and gaps that needed to be examined.

55. A number of issues were raised by the participants regarding the quantitative analysis and the development of the African region in the 1980s in general. Some participants wondered whether the per capita income classification should continue to be used in view of the fact that many other factors are involved in the economic development and performance of African countries. It was suggested that, for example, it might be useful to take the Sahel Region as one group.

56. It was also noted that there was a need to supplement the long-term models with short-term forecasts since many African countries face various problems and deviations in the short-run. In this connexion, it was strongly felt that for the secretariat to be able to make forecasts and adjustments based upon short-term deviations, it was necessary to establish very concrete relationships and feedback mechanisms between country officials and the ECA secretariat. It was, indeed, emphasized that the work of projections going on in the ECA secretariat should be seen and taken as a continuous process.

57. Another question raised by some participants related to the extent to which the work of the secretariat was married to the various reports of such meetings as the UNU/ECA Monrovia Colloquium on the prospects for development and economic growth in Africa especially to the year 2000 and the UNU/IILS Dakar Seminar on "Economic Planning and Social prospectives: whither Africa by the year 2000?" and the relationship which existed between the secretariat's work and the work of other research centres who were developing global models. It was felt that there was a need to establish and maintain contacts among the researchers of African development prospects.

58. With regard to the scenarios analyzed in the documents, it was observed that there might be need for scenarios that deal with the pressing issues in Africa such as self-sufficiency in food and the alternative sources of energy. It was also essential to have scenarios that enable the integration of social objectives and possibilities with the various targets and which, for example, enabled the determination of the needs of the rural sectors and the satisfaction of these needs. It was therefore necessary to use sectoral models to facilitate the harmonization of objectives. It was also pointed out that it would be useful to utilize other qualitative parameters in assessing the development prospects. It was, for example, very important for Africa to start thinking of strengthening "horizontal solidarity" within Africa where the rich can help the poor. This would necessitate the examination of ways and means to implement the horizontal solidarity among others by involving assistance from African bilateral and multilateral sources. Also vertical relationship (i.e., looking towards the developed countries) would need to be reviewed.

59. With regard to the various proposed scenario targets outlined in the ECA documents some participants felt that some targets were relatively ambitious. It was pointed out that the 7 per cent growth target would necessitate a very high investment rate of the order of over 30 per cent of GDP which would result into large debt problems for the African region. It was felt that financial constraints were crucial and hence only realistic investment rates could be envisaged.

60. However, it was pointed out that it was important to realize that (a) Africa was not poor in resources; (b) Africa could do better in terms of output expansion than has been done in the past two decades, and (c) what was needed was to identify problems and solutions to constraints at the national, regional and international levels. It was thus clear that there was the need for Africa to alter the existing trade, financial, manpower and economic relationships with the outside world. There was also the need for elaborating social objectives to eradicate mass poverty, disease, malnutrition, etc. In essence, to attain the high rates as those elaborated in the planned scenario it is necessary to clearly specify the policy instruments such as how to achieve a 4 per cent yearly increase in agricultural output, and over 9 per cent of manufacturing output, etc.

61. In this connexion, it was also noted that there was a need for the States to discuss the problems of their countries among themselves critically and frankly. The credibility of the African countries, it was emphasized, was important not only as regards the various targets but also with regard to issues such as whether or not the African countries can seriously undertake the various necessary reforms that are advocated and can efficiently plan for the utilization of aid.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Election of Officers (Agenda Item 7)

62. The Committee elected Mr. Fouad Lahlou (Morocco) as Chairman, and Mr. J.D. Edozien (Nigeria) and Mr. G.L. Cann (Ghana) as first and second Vice-Chairmen respectively. Mr. G. Boungou-Tsatou (Congo) was elected rapporteur.

Participation of experts

63. The following experts participated as advisors to the work of the Planning Committee: Dr. Robert Gardiner, Prof. H.M.A. Onitiri, members of the Committee for Development Planning and Prof. Ambica Ghosh.

Perspectives of the African region in the 1980s and policy implications (Agenda Item 8)

64. The discussion on the document entitled 'Perspectives of the African Region in the 1980s and policy implications' (E/CN.14/737, E/CN.14/PSD.1/7) continued on the 26 March in the first session of planning committee. The two essential points of discussion were: (1) the technical aspects of model building in the African context, (2) economic policy implications of the planned scenario for the 1980s.

65. Many participants made remarks regarding the classification of countries on a per capita income basis. It was felt that it would be useful in the classification to take into account the non-homogenous nature of countries which include many aspects in particular: (a) the Governments socio-economic strategies; (b) the socio-economic structure of production and income distribution; (c) degree of integration in world trade; (d) size of population; (e) geographical and ecological factors. However, it was stated that any type of classification has its own limitations and that nonetheless ECA classification conforms with the classification generally used in the UN system.

66. It was stressed that the econometric techniques used to describe African economies using historical data should be improved since it does not take into account catastrophic phenomena (such as droughts), social factors, including employment, fluctuations in world economies, particularly the prices of primary commodity, energy crisis, the size of the subsistence sectors, specifically the informal and non-monetary sectors and financial aspects particularly balance of payments and debt problems. However, it was emphasized that this type of simple normative exercise was useful and it should continue and be improved in the future. Short-term forecasting was also suggested to the ECA secretariat to be undertaken in collaboration with individual member countries and other international agencies.

67. Some participants expressed concern about the projections based on historical performances since these may not reflect the future policies of African governments which will follow the African Strategy for Development adopted at the fourteenth session of the Commission/fifth meeting of the Conference of Ministers at Rabat in March 1979. This Strategy aims at the creation of a new economic order including the attainment of collective self-reliance both at the subregional and regional levels. But it was emphasized that the historical scenario was studied to enable a comparative analysis of the consequences that would follow if past policies and trends prevailed in the 1980s.

68. Some participants pointed out that the proposed planned scenario was relatively ambitious but nevertheless challenging for the African region. The Conference, however believed that it was attainable. It was also emphasized that the model is not a planning model which can incorporate the various objectives of each individual African country but rather a consistent framework indicative of the future evolution of the African economies.

69. According to the planned scenario, agriculture should grow by 4 per cent which would enable the gradual attainment of self-sufficiency in food, manufacturing by 9.5 per cent, exports by 7.5 per cent and imports by 8.2 per cent. The scenario also clearly shows that efforts would have to be made to increase the volume of trade among developing African countries in line with the objective of collective self-reliance. In the social field it was observed that certain development objectives such as basic needs, i.e. nutrition, clothing, shelter, health, education and employment should be taken into account. As regards least developed African countries, the need was stressed for a fundamental restructuring of production to enable these countries to attain self-sufficiency through a more rational exploitation of natural resources, establishment of optimal production units, further utilization of human resources, building the necessary infrastructure especially in the 13 land-locked and island countries and strengthening subregional and regional co-operation.

70. The participants commended the ECA secretariat on the constructive work done in highlighting the socio-economic objectives for the 1980s, but some participants were rather concerned about the identification of the policies needed to achieve these objectives. For example some participants referred to the importance of carrying out sectoral studies and analyses of consumption patterns so as to identify a plan which would enable the correspondence of the structure of production to the real needs of the populations of the African region and thereby also reduce, in particular, the imports of food. Also, the need to survey the potentials in natural resources especially in agriculture, mining, energy, water and environment.

71. The Committee then turned to the discussion of the policy implications of the planned scenario as proposed in document E/CN.14/PSD.1/7. Many participants briefly reported their country experiences. Emphasis was given to the development of agriculture and agro-based industries, development of social sectors, economic infrastructure, African co-operation as well as the fight against mass poverty. In that context many participants thought that the planned scenario proposed by the ECA secretariat for the African region in the 1980s should have included some specific social objectives.

72. From the ensuing discussions it was noted that to achieve the 4 per cent growth target in agriculture, tremendous efforts would have to be directed towards land reform, remunerative prices for agricultural products, appropriate mechanization, irrigation, intensive application of basic inputs, e.g. fertilizers, the establishment of storage capacities, transport, distribution and the processing of agricultural products, the better utilization of human resources and the development of scientific research centres. Further, it was urged that there was a necessity for effective programmes of rural extension services.

73. Some participants stressed the importance of food crops so as to achieve food self-sufficiency although it was noted that such an objective should be accompanied by the need to increase the production of other export crops so as not to reduce the export earnings in some countries and therefore impede the financing of their development plans. Nonetheless, food self-sufficiency, it was agreed, was a major priority and it was suggested that it would be useful for countries to construct food balance sheets at the national level in order to indicate the year-by-year priorities with regard to the achievement of collective self-sufficiency in food by the year 2000.

74. In the field of manufacturing industry the participants pointed out the need to use local material and local skills and technology and to develop industrial co-operation in Africa. Specifically it was pointed out that for basic and large-scale industries such as iron and steel, metal industries, chemical and petrochemical industries there is a need to harmonize industrial policies for Africa as a whole in view of subregional and regional integration. In this respect it was believed that ECA could carry out capacity utilization studies to form a basis for rationalizing resource mobilization and allocation to such expensive projects at the regional level. Similarly with respect to import substitution industries, the secretariat of ECA, in co-operation with relevant regional organizations, could assist in identifying the types of industries which can best be undertaken at multinational levels.

75. The significance of transport in the African context was emphasized by many participants particularly with regard to the land-locked countries. In view of the fact that transport consumes a lot of energy, the studies being undertaken by ECA secretariat in energy should bear in mind such aspects of the problem. It was also pointed out that in view of the growing importance of the energy problem and its increasing costs which absorbed a great portion of African export earnings, efforts should be made to incorporate into the model a study on the supply and demand of energy in the African region as a whole and its short-term or long-term projection up to the year 2000 so as to enable African countries to build up a regional energy programme in the fields of production, consumption and energy conservation.

76. The Conference also noted the need for establishing subregional training centres and for orienting the education system in line with the socio-economic development and employment opportunities.

77. To achieve collective self-reliance emphasis was put by many participants on the need to promote trade among African countries in order to increase the share of intra-African trade in the total volume of trade of Africa and to increase their solidarity particularly in monetary and financial arrangements. It was emphasized that Africa should develop its own system for domestic resource mobilization at the local, national and regional levels (e.g. promotion of domestic saving through the banking system and other financial institutions, taxation, curtailment of non-essential consumption, more efficient and unwasteful use of domestic resources, etc.) and that external financing should only be used to supplement the efforts of the countries of the African region. In that respect, a call was made for a pan-African horizontal solidarity for the channelling of resources from the rich, oil-surplus countries to the poor, non-oil, least developed countries. In this respect, the representative of UNCTAD suggested that appropriate mechanisms should be established in order to mobilize and channel such resources to the countries with resource gaps.

78. In the field of planning, it was stressed that there was an urgent need to make the proposed information system in the ECA operational so as to enable African countries to use it and to follow closely the development, elaboration and execution of different country plans. The importance of regional planning was also stressed since it can facilitate the decentralization and implementation of decisions. Also emphasis was put on the need for a close relationship between the plans and the annual budget as the latter determines the direction and pace of plan implementation.

79. Many participants stressed the necessity in many African countries to give to planning agencies adequate leverage in deciding the pattern of actual resource allocation to the sectors in order to ensure that plan targets are met. Particularly, there should be a better co-ordination among planning agencies, central banks and finance ministries in various countries in order to ensure the coherence between the monetary and fiscal policies on one hand and the plan objectives on the other.

80. The representative of the USSR in his statement emphasized that the need for a new approach to the solution of Africa's economic problems was prompted by the deterioration of the economic situation and the persistent unequal, oppressed position of African developing countries vis-a-vis the capitalist world economy. These, of course, have been spurred on by the energy and monetary crises and the activities of especially the transnational corporations which were remitting larger shares of their profits abroad. The amount of profits being remitted from the developing countries of Africa exceeds the new inflow of direct foreign investment. This testifies to the fact that the plundering of African resources by foreign monopoly capital is being continued. He noted that the development strategy for Africa which was endorsed by the ECA Conference of Ministers in Rabat in 1979 was more than just a part of the United Nations global strategy, but was an essentially new one, containing a new approach to development and calling for the replacement of the orthodox principles by fundamentally new ones. The concept of self-reliance, he noted, paid great attention to man and his requirements and attached an important role to the national state, to the democratization of the development process, to inter-African co-operation and to collective efforts for achieving collective self-reliance.

Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) (Agenda Item 9)

81. At the invitation of the Chairman of the Planners' Committee, the Director of IDEP presented an oral report covering the following four matters:

(a) He told the Conference that the United Nations General Assembly had approved IDEP's statute at its session in December 1979; and that this statute was now operational;

(b) He then submitted the three documents which IDEP Governing Council had decided, at its twenty-first session held at Addis Ababa from 21 to 23 March 1980, to transmit to the Conference. The first document (IDEP/21/GC/2) provided an assessment of the financial situation.

(i) Because of the accumulated surpluses of the second phase and of the last two years, the $360,000 revolving fund was being replenished;

(ii) The revenues originated from the following sources in 1979 (in United States dollars)

- Government contributions : 630,327.39
- Annual contribution from UNDP : 800,000.00
- Other resources : 206,300.92

(iii) The expenditure amounted to 1,550,338.07 which led to a surplus of 86,290.24.

(iv) Other resources are essentially for scholarship.

82. The August 1978 - March 1980 progress report (CA/117/80) described both stages of the two-year programme completed or in progress (nine-month, six-month and three-month courses). It set out the number of trainees and the financing of their fellowships and also a list of the research work carried out over the period. The third document (R/073/79-R/012-78) covered the work programme for the 1980/81 academic year.

83. In that regard, the Director mentioned that 70 trainees were expected for admission to the nine- and three-month programmes commencing in October 1980 subject to IPF fellowship financing; he also pointed out that from 1981, a second option in integrated rural development would be offered as a three-month course. He ended by saying that a round table conference on "Africa and the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade" would be organized jointly with ECA late in 1980.

84. The major problem was still the inadequate number of fellowships financed out of national IPFs, which limited the level of recruitment; in 1979 only 45 out of 84 candidates could be admitted.

(c) He then submitted a draft resolution to the Conference of Ministers for consideration. The draft, which had been prepared along the lines indicated by the Governing Council, dealt with financial questions and recommended that African States should:

(i) provide fellowships financed out of the national IPFs;
(ii) pay all their arrears before the end of 1980;
(iii) pay their contributions regularly.

(d) Finally, he pointed out that the term of office of six members of the Governing Council had expired and that the Conference would have to replace them.

85. With reference to the financing of fellowships, the UNDP Resident Representative and member of the Governing Council informed the Conference of the decisions taken at Mbabane (Swaziland) in January 1980 by the Resident Representatives in Africa. The latter had taken cognizance of the joint action that they would have to undertake with Governments so as to include in national IPFs the fellowships that they wished to reserve for IDEP students. Hence those funds which are usually not fully utilized - the level ranging between 40 and 60 per cent could be used to train planners at IDEP.

86. The main questions raised by the Planners during the discussion related to:

(i) curricula;
(ii) recruitment of students;
(iii) the financing of the Institute.

87. A number of participants expressed the wish that a different option, namely rural development, rather than industrialization, should be adopted for the three-month courses, and that short specific courses should be offered. The Director replied that, over the period 1971-1976, short courses had occupied a predominant place in the training provided, but that, from 1977 onwards, the competent authorities had decided to give priority to the two-year course, and that swallowed up all the Institute's financial and manpower resources.

88. Participants also asked for information on the educational level and methods of recruiting students. The Director pointed out that applicants had to have a degree and that all applicants are proposed by government authorities and examined by IDEP. In reply to a question concerning African inter-state organizations, he said that applicants from such organizations would be acceptable, since the applicants were nationals of member countries their applications could be submitted by their States.

89. With regard to research programmes, he pointed out that they were worked out by the Academic Board of the Institute. A report on those programmes was submitted to the Governing Council, which could thus express its opinions and indicate priorities. Some participants expressed the wish that Planners should be more regularly consulted on those programmes.

90. A number of participants expressed their concern with regard to the inadequate size of the teaching staff, translators and interpreters and therefore of finance. In that connexion, the UNDP Representative informed the Conference that UNDP was in favour of increasing its contribution for phase III (1982-1986).

91. The Director informed the Conference that the Governing Council had just started to think systematically about phase III of IDEP. An *ad hoc* Committee set up within the Council would examine the different options relating to training, research, the number of professional staff required, and finance (scale of contributions for States, etc.). Thus all possibilities corresponding to the different wishes expressed by the Conference would be considered.

92. The Conference unanimously recommended that the draft resolution it had adopted* should be submitted to the Conference of Ministers.

93. The Conference then proceeded to elect new members to replace the six outgoing members of the Governing Council (Algeria, Morocco, the Upper Volta, Burundi, the United Republic of Cameroon and Somalia).

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* Annex.

The regional sub-groups proposed the following candidates:

North Africa: Mr. Kacim Drachemi (Algeria) - re-elected
Mr. Fouad Lahlou (Morocco) - re-elected

West Africa: Mr. Justin Gnidéhou (Benin) - to replace
Mr. Pierre Yahita (the Upper Volta)

Central Africa: Mr. Patrice Mandeng (United Republic of Cameroon) - re-elected.
Mr. Hilaire Babassana (the Congo) - to replace
Mr. Anselme Murango (Burundi)

East Africa: Mr. M.S.C. Mulonga (Zambia) - to replace
Mr. Omar Osman (Somalia)

94. The Chairman stated that the term of office of the six newly elected or re-elected members would be four years and would take effect from 1 January 1981. The term of office of the six other members of the Council, not due for renewal in 1980 would expire in 1982, as they had been elected for four years in 1978.

95. The Chairman invited the newly elected members to submit their curricula vitae to him which they did.

Programme of work in development planning, projections and policies (Agenda Item 10)

96. On item 10 of the provisional agenda, a member of the secretariat introduced the following documents:

(a) Review of ECA activities in the field of development planning, projections and policies 1978-1979 and proposed work programme 1980-1981 as approved by the fourteenth session of the Commission/fifth meeting of the Conference of Ministers, Rabat 20-28 March 1979 E/CN.14/PSD.1/10.

(b) Programme of work and priorities for 1980-1981 E/CN.14/707/Rev.1.

97. He outlined the main elements of the work carried out during 1978-1979 by the Socio-Economic Research and Planning Division in the field of development planning, projections and policies and emphasized that the programme was generally based on the Development Strategy for Africa for the Third United Nations Development Decade outlined in resolution 332 (XIV) adopted at the fifth meeting of the Conference of Ministers. During the same period the studies undertaken and completed include: (a) the Survey of Economic and Social Conditions in Africa for the periods 1977-1978, and 1978-1979 including the special studies on economic growth, employment, income distribution and mass poverty in the African region, (b) studies on the exchange control system in about 40 African developing countries as an introduction to the study of the sources, magnitudes and mechanisms of foreign exchange leakages in African countries and their impact on the availability of development resources and on external debt accumulation, (c) perspectives of the African region in the 1980s and policy implications, (d) projections results for some individual African countries, (e) quantitative analysis of the problems and perspectives of the African least developed countries in the framework of the Third United Nations Development Decade and (f) comparative analysis of the projections made for developing African countries by various United Nations bodies.

98. It was pointed out that the Division is divided into three substantive sections namely (a) the socio-economic policy, planning and projection section, (b) the socio-economic surveys and analysis section and (c) the fiscal, monetary and financial policy and institutions section. He added that the first conference on the problems and perspectives of the African least developed countries recommended the establishment of an adequately staffed unit in the Division to work on the programmes requested by the Conference. These include missions to review and appraise the progress on the implementation of the Comprehensive New Programme of Action initiated under UNCTAD Resolution 122 (V) and to service an annual Conference of Ministers of Least Developed African Countries. He reiterated the extremely heavy workload of the Division and the extremely limited staff resources available of a mere fourteen professional staff including the Chief of the Division. Because of these limitations some programme elements were not implemented in 1978-1979. He drew also the attention of the Conference to the impossibility of carrying out all elements of the voluminous work programme for 1980-1981 with the present resources.

99. The participants congratulated the Division for the constructive and very useful work undertaken and completed during the period 1978-1979. Some participants noted that studies such as those on mass poverty, unemployment and income distribution were very important and could be treated in greater detail and if possible should be introduced in the models built.

100. In discussing the work programme for 1980-1981 the Conference noted the various problems and constraints faced by the Division. These constraints include the severe shortages of staff and financial resources, the lack of adequate data, methodologies and analytical tools with regard to some projects. In view of these constraints the Conference accepted to set priorities for the projects in the work programme for the 1980-1981 period.

101. It was agreed that the following programme elements be given priority in the period 1980-1981:

(a) The annual survey of current economic and social development and policies (9.241.02, 9.241.03, 9.241.04 and 9.244.02)

(b) Sectoral and employment projections for ECA region (9.242.15)

(c) The study of measures for effective co-ordination of development activities between the public and private sectors in a number of African countries (9.243.03)

(d) Analysis and evaluation of the impact of tariff and non-tariff protection on industrialization in Africa (9.243.05)

(e) Studies of the design and applicability of social economic indicators in the African context (9.243.07)

(f) Studies of the role of national development banks as instruments for economic development (9.245.02). A seminar will be organized in this respect and the report will be submitted to the next Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians, Demographers 1982 for information.

(g) Studies of the role of the non-banking financial institutions in the mobilization of financial resources for development (9.245.03)

(h) Work programme on the least developed African countries as adopted by the first session of the Conference on the Problems and Prospects of the African Least Developed Countries (see paragraph 42).

102. It was also agreed that items (b), (c), (d), (e) would constitute the main elements of the agenda for the Planning Committee of the Second Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers in 1982.

103. With regard to the remaining elements of the work programme, efforts should be made to get the collaboration of member States and some international organizations for their implementation. For example, it was suggested that individual countries should be encouraged to undertake studies regarding the building up of inventories of resources - national, human, institutional and others. It was however pointed out that it might be difficult for other international organizations having their own established programmes to undertake the various elements.

104. In view of the various resource constraints faced by the Division in the implementation of its programme of work the Conference strongly recommended that the human and financial resources of the Socio-Economic Research and Planning Division should be substantially increased so as to enable the Division to implement its programme elements taking into account the priorities as laid out in paragraph 45.

105. The representative of the UNCTAD secretariat introduced a note entitled "Co-operation in model-building for economic analysis and forecasting concerning African countries". He reported that preliminary contacts already undertaken by UNCTAD and ECA show that there are very few countries where national models already exist but that interest in starting such work has been expressed by about 20 African countries. The meeting recommended that with regard to the projection models, ECA, in collaboration with UNCTAD, should make available to countries which want these models all the necessary elements for the implementation of model building, installation and simulation to enable these countries to undertake projections and short- and medium-term forecasts. He considered ECA to be the natural real point of such co-operation and that a possible way of financing the activity could be a UNDP project executed by ECA in association with UNCTAD.

106. The Committee adopted a draft statement entitled 'Proposals and recommendations submitted to the Sixth Meeting of the Conference of Ministers/Fifteenth Session of the Commission" to be submitted to the plenary meeting.

STATISTICS COMMITTEE

Election of officers (Agenda item 11)

107. The outgoing Chairman of the tenth session of the Conference of African Statisticians, Mr. Ramesh Singh (Kenya), presided over the election. Mr. Lamine Diop (Senegal) was elected Chairman of the Committee, with Mr. Mitik Beyene (Ethiopia) and Mr. Clément Mierassa (Congo) as first and second Vice-Chairmen and Mr. J.B. Coker (Nigeria) as Rapporteur.

Statistical development (Agenda item 12)

(a) Report on ECA statistical activities

108. The secretariat presented document E/CN.14/PSD.1/11 which reported on ECA statistical activities since the last session of the Conference of African Statisticians. In general the report reflected a significant increase in the size of the ECA statistical programme, with greater emphasis on assistance to national statistical development through concerted efforts in specific areas such as the African Household Survey Capability Programme (AHSCP), the Regional Advisory Service in Demographic Statistics (RADS), the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA) and the project to improve national accounts and related basic series in least developed and newly independent countries.

109. In response to requirements expressed by the region, the ECA statistical programme was intended to assist countries in achieving a satisfactory allocation of resources between data collection and processing, analysis, plan formulation and monitoring. It was suggested that the principal shortfall was in data analysis. Efforts in this area would necessarily generate much closer links between statisticians and planners.

110. The Committee was pleased to note recent developments but did not undertake any general discussion because most of the component topics were covered under other agenda items. It also noted that African countries were beginning to play a more direct role in the implementation of the regional statistical programme and emphasize the importance of these efforts.

111. In response to a question the secretariat provided information on staff changes in the ECA Statistics Division since preparation of its report in December 1979. The overall position was 12 regular budget staff posts which were all filled and 15 extra-budgetary technical assistance posts, of which 11 were filled, with one recruit joining shortly and three posts still under recruitment. The last-named included two new posts in civil registration and cartography..

112. The Committee expressed particular concern about continuation of the national accounts project for which current funding arrangements would end in mid-1981. It emphasized the need for periodic advisory missions and training for countries which still lacked adequate resources for preparation of the basic aggregates.

113. Better working contact between the ECA Statistics Division and sub-regional agencies was requested but it was appreciated that close collaboration already existed in respect of a number of specific projects.

(b) Statistical Organisation

114. A representative of the secretariat introduced the agenda item referring document E/CN.14/PSD.1/13 entitled "Report on the Organisation and Staffing of African Statistical Services", which reviewed problems related to the position of statistical staff and training needs, the place of national statistical services in the government structure, legislation, co-ordination of statistical activities and new areas of statistical development, with special reference to energy statistics and environmental statistics.

115. The Committee was of the opinion that the position of statistical staff in national statistical services still gave cause for concern as a result of the exodus of trained staff toward other more attractive sectors. Various solutions to the problem were suggested including the improvement of statisticians' working conditions, the need to have fellowship holders sign commitments to serve within the national statistical services during a minimum period of time and a rational staff assignment policy. Nevertheless, the Committee endorsed the conclusion of the 1977 Working Group to review statistical training needs in Africa to the effect that it was neither realistic nor advisable to put a stop to the current drift of national statistical service personnel to other sectors.

116. According to the most recent estimates from the secretariat, the region's training needs over the next ten years were estimated at 5,000 professional statisticians and 7,000 middle-level statisticians. Several representatives expressed doubts as to the reliability of the figures given in Table 3 of the document under consideration from which the above mentioned estimates were derived. Some representatives considered that the needs were over estimated while others maintained that they were under estimated. The representative of the secretariat explained that the estimates were a synthesis of information provided by countries in various surveys conducted by ECA and by other bodies such as the European Centre for Advanced Training in Statistics and Economics for Developing Countries (CESD). Reference was made to the fact that national statistical services always found it difficult to specify the number of posts they would like to have available because programme changes and budgetary constraints were unknown factors. Although the figures given might not be very reliable, they had been reviewed several times and constituted a suitable working base given the objective of meeting the national needs of countries of the region. Participants were asked to send any new information which they might have available to the secretariat as a periodic review of the estimates established to-date was necessary. The representative of the Munich Centre for Advanced Training in Applied Statistics for Developing Countries suggested that short-term training needs should be evaluated. Many agencies wished that the statistical requirements are further broken down to indicate training of basic statistics and specialised training for serving statisticians. This would help them in planning the assistance to be given by them.

117. With respect to the place of national statistical services within the government structure, the Committee noted that 79 per cent of the services remained attached to the ministry or body in charge of planning, thus correlating the desire of countries of the region to put their economic and social development plans on a statistical foundation. The advantages and disadvantages of the different positions in some countries were considered. Some representatives expressed the opinion that national statistical services should be somewhat autonomous. The Committee was told that in countries like Cuba, Japan and New Zealand, there existed a ministry of statistics and that in Japan a national statistics day had been instituted. Finally, after thorough discussions, the committee felt that, regardless of the location of national statistical services within the government structure, the prime concern was to ensure the services' efficiency. The ability of national statistical services to respond promptly to the needs of users actually contributed to enhance recognition of the role of statistics in the economic and social development process.

118. The Committee recommended that a working group on the organization of statistical services, similar to that which met for Asia and the Pacific, should be organized in Africa. Such a group would include not only statisticians but also representatives of various departments and bodies interested in statistics. Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Finance, private sectors, etc. In addition the committee expressed the hope that, in the context of making governments more aware of the importance of statistical services, the reports of the working group on Asia and the Pacific and of the courses organized by the Munich Centre for Advanced Training on the organization of statistical services should be disseminated as widely as possible in all African countries.

119. The Committee paid special attention to the issue of the co-ordination of statistical activities at the national level. Several ways of ensuring such co-ordination were considered in the light of the experience of various countries. In Kenya, a consultative machinery in which various Government authorities and the private sector participated had been set up. In Ghana, a statistics board for co-ordinating statistical work had had been set up and statistics had been accorded greater importance in Ghana's new Constitution. France had a national statistics board which programmed statistical work. Several representatives also pointed out that their countries intended to set up interministerial committees for statistical co-ordination. The Committee recognized the usefulness of co-ordinating and consultative committees of that kind as a means of bringing producers and users of statistics together and of avoiding duplication of work. In the Committee's view, there should be co-ordination right from the start, from the study of concepts, definitions and classifications to the analysis and publication of results. National statistics authorities should be responsible for the technical aspects of concepts, definitions, classifications, etc. For the sake of harmonization within each country and of international comparability. Some representatives also said that problems sometimes arose in collaboration between national statistics authorities and the statistical units of different ministerial departments. In that connexion the representative of France described the experiences of INSEE, which maintained standing contacts with the statistical sections of ministries, thus ensuring satisfactory work co-ordination.

120. The Committee expressed keen interest in the two new areas of statistical development - energy statistics and environmental statistics - suggested by the secretariat in addition to programmes such as AMSCP and social indicators. Many statistics for those two areas already existed in the various government bodies, but there were problems of concepts and definitions. Co-ordination was necessary in that area too. The Committee recognized the importance of the two areas while stressing their complexity. It suggested that the work of the United Nations Statistical Office and of other bodies concerned such as the United Nations Environmental Programme, should be brought to the attention of the countries of the region so that they could study the question. It was suggested that short-term consultants could, if necessary, be sent to centres participating in the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA) to deal with those two areas.

121. The Committee was of the opinion that appropriate legislation was needed before the inception of statistical operations such as censuses and surveys, so that all the necessary financial and human resources could be mustered for them.

122. Finally, the UDEAC representative expressed the wish that for the sake of more effective co-operation, the ECA would also pay attention to the problems of subregional organizations in future surveys on the organization and staffing of African statistical services.

(c) Report on the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA)

123. In the presentation of the papers, "Progress report on the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA)", E/CN.14/PSD.1/14 and "Report of the meeting of directors of statistical training centres", E/CN.14/PSD.1/15, the secretariat gave a summary of the background to the STPA and the UNDP-financed project giving it operational support. The role of the ECA as co-ordinator was stressed. A concise review of the progress made since the arrival of the two training advisers was then given. Reference was made to the estimates on which the programme was based. These had come in for some criticism during the discussion of paper E/CN.14/PSD.1/13, some delegates thinking they were too high, and others too low. It was agreed however that they provided a basis for targets to be aimed at, and that in the meantime the estimates should be up-dated.

124. Reference was made to problems which had been encountered and which were referred to in these two papers. Prominent among these were the need to make special provision for Portuguese-speaking countries and that of loss of trained staff. However, the main problem was that of obtaining an adequate supply of fellowships for students wishing to attend the Centres.

125. The attention of the Committee was drawn to a recommendation made in the Report of the STPA Directors' Meeting (E/CN.14/PSD.1/15 Annex I). This proposed that ACP countries should ask EEC to set up a regional fund to provide fellowships to the Centres.

126. As follow-up action to this recommendation, an ECA mission was sent to various donors in Europe. The general message received was that cuts had been made in technical assistance (Commonwealth Secretariat and Overseas Development Administration, U.K.). Funds were available, however, but the allocation depended

on the degree of priority given by the countries to the fellowship applications. The secretariat recommended that Directors of statistical offices should seek to have adopted by their Governments, country statistical training programmes to fit in with the STPA targets. This would help to ensure the approval by the appropriate officials in their countries of the required number of fellowship applications.

127. From meetings of ECA officials with EEC, it would appear that the best way to secure the benefit of the generous attitude of the EEC to the STPA was to submit to them a proposed Regional Project for support to the STPA. EEC could provide say 240 fellowships a year for five years, (120 for French-speaking centres and 120 for English-speaking centres) together with provision for lecturer/consultants and their counterpart training and support in provision of supporting infrastructure such as accommodation facilities.

128. The meeting was informed that under Lomé II Convention it was now possible for EEC to consider the provision of student fellowships for attendance at regional centres. Such provision could be included in Regional Project Documents submitted to the EEC and supported by user countries and the ACP secretariat. The Committee therefore recommended that a Regional Project Document or documents, as appropriate, be prepared for submission to the European Economic Community, requesting operational support to the Statistical Training Programme for Africa, through the Centres participating in this programme. The Project(s) would provide for technical assistance over a period of five years in the form of:

(1) an adequate number of student-fellowships to the Centres per annum;

(2) lecturer/consultants at the Centres; and

(3) fellowships for the training of counterpart staff at the Centres.

Such a proposal would be much assisted by support from:

(1) the user-countries of the Centres;

(2) the ACP secretariat; and

(3) the present influential conference.

129. While confirming that training of statisticians was a priority area for his organization, the representative of EEC explained that the procedure for obtaining fellowships is not as simple as would appear from the introductory statement of the secretariat. This statement contained errors which should be corrected to avoid any misunderstanding. The EEC multi-annual training programme operates by the following means:

(1) award of long and short-term fellowships

(2) provision of instructors and lecturers to institutes in ACP countries

(3) organization of seminars and training workshops

(4) provision of teaching material

Procedures are provided for in the Lomé Convention and in the agreements between EEC and the countries of the Maghreb and Mashrak. Each country of the African region has a training package which has to be elaborated in terms of multi-annual programme established in agreement with the Commission of the Economic Community.

It is therefore essential that during the programming missions which EEC undertakes in the countries, the local authorities should indicate their needs for statistical training fellowships during the next five years.

130. When a training institute has a regional character, technical assistance can be requested by countries of the region concerned, for the benefit of that institute, out of the regional fund provided for by the Lomé Convention. So far, this assistance has materialized in the form of provision of lecturers, organization of seminars and provision of equipment. Indeed EEC considered that the studies are primarily for the benefit of the individual countries and it was normal to change the student fellowships to the national IPFs. If the EEC-ACP Committee so decides it will be possible that the training institutes will benefit from a fellowship allocation to be utilised annually for the benefit of trainees from ACP States.

131. In the discussion that followed, attention was drawn to the problem of staffing at the Centres. The Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics, Uganda, in particular, the Committee was informed, wished to institute a postgraduate course leading to M.Sc. This was in line with the recommendations of the Tenth Conference of African Statisticians and the needs of the countries to be served by the Institute. The Committee was informed that it was adequate first to send a graduate on fellowship for one or two years abroad to obtain a Master's degree or Ph.D. and that thereafter such a candidate would be able to return and take over from the experienced expatriate. To maintain the desired high standards for a postgraduate course this, the Committee was informed, was hardly sufficient. This constituted a difficult problem as technical assistance donors do not usually contemplate financing long-term technical assistance.

132. The question was raised as to whether or not it was desirable to establish other centres under the STPA, to meet the aims of the Programme. It was pointed out that the participating Centres did not constitute a 'closed shop'. Others could participate, provided they operated or were prepared to operate on a regional basis, but the Committee favoured the expansion of existing centres.

133. Attention was drawn to a short fall between the figures of 240 fellowships per year referred to in connexion with EEC fellowships and the numbers stated as required in the estimates as shown in paper E/CN.14/PSD.1/13. The Committee was informed that national training centres and in-service training were contemplated besides EEC.

134. It was noted that in view of the continuing transfer of statisticians from national statistical services to other branches of government and the private sector, STPA should, as far as possible, aim at expansion of training facilities to a level which would meet all national requirements for statistical personnel.

135. It was pointed out that too rigid an adherence to high entrance scholastic requirements would be self-defeating for educationally less developed countries whose immediate need for statistical workers was pressing. Provision, it was felt,

should be made for those students falling short of the required qualifications to be admitted to a one-year preparatory course to enable them to make up such deficiencies. Reference was made to exemptions from entrance examinations to the middle-level course for some students on the grounds of two year's working experience in a statistical office.

136. The representative of Nigeria stated that the statistical training requirements of his country are so high that it will be necessary to get external assistance to supplement the national efforts, contrary to the impression created in the paper E/CN.14/PSD.1/14. The Committee also appreciated the interest expressed in devoting special attention to the needs of the Portuguese-speaking countries and agreed willingly to a special meeting of the representatives of those countries and the ECA.

137. It was felt that it would, in the future, be helpful to invite some representatives of user countries to the deliberations of the directors of STPA centres in their regular meetings in order to discuss problems of common interest such as bridging the gap between theory and practice.

138. The need for the training of specialists in various fields of statistics was stressed. The present gap between demand and supply on this area must be bridged within the next few years.

139. Finally the importance of courses in electronic data processing was stressed. The Committee was then informed that there were enough prospective donors willing to support the STPA. In principle the donors, the Committee was informed, welcome the STPA proposals and would be prepared to consider providing some support under their normal technical co-operation procedures for a carefully worked out training programme by individual user countries. The interested donor agencies included multilateral donors such as the Commonwealth Secretariat through its Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC), the European Economic Community (EEC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and bilateral donors such as the Overseas Development Administration (ODA), United Kingdom, the Ministry of Cooperation and the Institute national de la statistique et des études économiques (INSEE), France, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States Aid Programme.

140. Reference was made to the variety of short-term courses and seminars for practising statisticians available in the Federal Republic of Germany, United Kingdom, France and the United States of America. The Munich Centre for advanced training in applied statistics, the Committee was informed, has been working out arrangements to conduct a six-week seminars in African statistical training centres for the coming three years, and attention was drawn to the valuable work of this centre.

141. The Committee endorsed the Report of the Meeting of the Directors of the Centres participating in the Statistical Training Programme for Africa and its recommendation at Annex I. It also reiterated that action should be taken as soon as possible to meet the statistical training needs of the Portuguese-speaking countries.

(d) i - Co-ordination of technical assistance for African statistical development

142. The discussion was based on two reports, Technical Assistance to African statistical development, E/CN.14/PSD.1/15 and Co-ordination of Technical Assistance for African statistical development E/CN.14/PSD.1/15Add.1. These give a quantitative review of technical assistance in statistics to countries of Africa provided by the United Nations - i.e., UNDP, UNFPA and certain individual countries by a system of funds in trust, international agencies and bilateral agencies. The review covered the period 1977-1979 and, in some cases, information on expected technical assistance in statistics activities for 1980/81.

143. The reports provide information on actual or estimated total expenditure by agencies over the period by year, on fellowships awarded and utilized by countries, on training courses convened by certain training institutes and the number of fellows who attended such courses. The reports also list various projects carried out during the period by country and by experts. They also provide a description by certain agencies on procedures which countries should take to obtain technical assistance in statistics.

144. In introducing the paper, the representative of the secretariat stated that the two documents were prepared in response to a request from the tenth Conference of African Statisticians for a paper on the co-ordinated contribution of technical assistance activities to Africa from all available sources. He stated that although this presentation falls short of the desired goal, it however represented a very useful start which should be improved considerably for presentation to the next Conference. The secretariat made efforts to get contributions from all agencies including statistical training institutions, but, apparently due to the short notice given for providing contributions, in many cases such specific information could not be obtained from the large mass of information available to agencies. Since the preparatory time would be much longer for the paper for the new conference it is expected that more agencies will be able to make contributions. These future reports will provide country by country analysis of technical assistance activities from all sources.

145. In reviewing the substance of the reports, the meeting was informed that total financial contribution to technical assistance activities in Africa from UNDP and UNFPA have increased over the past six years, and that UNFPA's contribution was further significantly increased between 1978 and 1979. This trend would continue into the 1980s as UNFPA continues to provide financial support to developing countries in the improvement of their civil registration systems as well as for preparatory activities connected with the 1980 round of population and housing censuses.

146. The meeting was informed that a few countries had not yet taken up fellowships available to them in their country projects, and the secretariat hoped that this would be looked into. The reports reviewed individual important sections of agencies contributions ranging from lists of projects expected to be undertaken by ILO during 1980/81; UNESCO's total expenditure of $1.1 million during 1977-79; the availability of technical assistance from the World Bank to developing countries, the Statistical

Office of the European Communities financial assistance to the Munich Training Centre towards the conduct of statistical training courses to meet the demands of developing countries; past and, more important, future training courses in specialised statistical fields that have been and that will be conducted by the Munich Training Centre; the useful contribution provided by British technical assistance and finally the technical assistance from the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation.

147. Areas to which countries may wish to direct requests for future technical assistance were the improvement of national civil registration systems, the participation in the 1983 World Census of industrial statistics and the improvement of the organization of national statistical services. In each case, actions that countries may wish to follow were outlined.

148. In conclusion, the Committee was called upon to consider:

(a) Broadening the coverage of the report to include technical assistance activities in planning and demography.

(b) Approve the method of presentation adopted in the report including the proposed country by country analysis.

(c) Urge all agencies to provide information covering their technical assistance activities for inclusion in future reports.

149. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the report which it considered very informative and useful. The Committee especially thanked all agencies including the UNFPA for the technical assistance they have provided to enable countries improve their statistical systems.

150. Various agencies provided additional information concerning their technical assistance in statistics programmes. In particular the Munich Training Centre informed the Committee it will provide two additional training courses on specialised statistical fields one each in Asia and Africa during 1981. Information will be sent to countries.

151. Some participants suggested that because the report was very informative and useful to them the secretariat should consider issuing it annually and distributing it. The secretariat expressed its sympathy to the participants but explained the difficulties that would be encountered in obtaining information on an annual basis. It was agreed that the present practice of a bi-annual report should continue for the time being.

(d) ii - Directory of African Specialists in Statistics

152. The secretariat presented briefly the Directory of African Specialists in Statistics (E/CN.14/PSD.1/17) which was prepared at the request of the tenth session of the Conference of African Statisticians. It was pointed out that such a publication is intended to enable the identification of African experts whose services might be used within the context of Technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC). The present issue is considered as provisional since many specialists, particularly in the public sector have not responded to the survey which has been organised by ECA. It is hoped that the next issue will be far more complete and show improvements.

153. In reply to a question, the secretariat explained that the Directory prepared by the ECA Public Administration, Management and Manpower Division includes specialists in various fields while the efforts of the Statistics Division are concentrated on the specialists in statistics only. This does not exclude the possibility of merging the two publications at a later stage when the coverage of the Directory of African Specialists in Statistics will be considered satisfactory.

154. The offer of the representative of France to send to ECA the Directory of past students of ENSAE and CESD was welcomed by the secretariat which also invited the countries and agencies to co-operate in the improvement of this publication both in terms of quantity and quality.

(e) Data processing

155. In introducing E/CN.14/PSD.1/18, "Report on African Statistical Data Processing", a member of the secretariat briefly reviewed the developments leading to the fourth regional survey of data processing capabilities and requirements and pointed out that, unlike its predecessors which had treated only government statistical offices and the computerisation of government statistics, that survey which had been undertaken during the 1978-1979 period had attempted to cover all statistical and electronic data processing organizations in the developing African countries and had inquired more deeply into the various aspects of the subject, taking into account the observations and recommendations made by the Conference of African Statisticians at its last session. It was also pointed out that there was a low response rate representing a third of the questionnaires despatched and an inequitable distribution of the countries and organizations addressed, so that although some useful inferences had been made, it was difficult to draw with confidence a picture of the data processing situation in the region. It was agreed that the data processing centres in a country would be best reached through that country's central statistical office which should collaborate with the ECA secretariat in the conduct of EDP surveys in getting the questionnaires completed.

156. It was explained that an attempt had been made not only to describe the present situation and the plans for the acquisition and use of data processing facilities in the developing countries of the region, the related tasks and work-loads, staff and related resources as well as training, but also establish an evaluation of the equipment in use and of suppliers' services.

157. The Committee was informed that with very few exceptions, the computers in use had been found to be of the third generation, and were of variable core capacity and were greatly under-utilized, and there was generally very little support equipment. There would have to be some change in these arrangements if the resolution taken by the Conference of Ministers at its fifth session last year in Morocco was to be satisfied in the matter of the creation of a network of data banks.

158. The Committee was further informed that a growing tendency had been observed for the centralization of public sector computer activities, but that was not always associated with the rationalisation of the use of computer equipment.

159. It was reported that thanks mainly to the activities of the U.S. Bureau of the Census and the United Nations Statistical Office, several countries seemed to be provided with specific software packages such as COCENTS and XTALLY for producing tables from censuses and surveys. However it did not appear that many countries had packages for editing, such as CONCOR, and generally a low level of software packages had been observed for the region. This was thought to be unfortunate since the use of such packages would reduce considerably the program development effort, and could be extremely useful where there were not sufficient programming or systems personnel. In that connexion mention was made of PSD.1/INF.6, "Computer processing of survey data in developing countries", which contained a critical review of packages for survey analysis as well as the paper E/CN.14/PSD.1/27, "A General Report on Demographic data collection, Processing and Analysis in Africa" wherein the subject was treated within the context of demographic and social statistics and analysis and a 658 page document entitled "A comparative review of statistical software" edited by Ivor Francis and issued by the International Association for Statistical Computing in 1977.

160. A severe shortage of systems analysis and software programmers had been observed for the region and a great and growing demand had been identified for EDP personnel at almost all levels as well as a paucity of relevant formal training institutions in Africa. Also it had been judged that such training as was provided by local suppliers of equipment fell short of actual needs. In the circumstances it seemed appropriate to consider an increase in the number of formal training EDP institutions or the introduction of appropriate courses at the existing universities in the region.

161. It was noted that interest in the development of the various aspects of computer science had arisen from the increased universal demand for ready information and that although a few countries had managed to keep abreast of developments, many experienced difficulties in their application. Finally it was suggested that African countries should cooperate with each other, so that those at a disadvantage could seek and obtain technical assistance from their more fortunate neighbours, and in this connexion it was proposed to compile a directory of EDP experts in the region and to appoint a well-qualified regional adviser in data processing, in addition to those attached to the Regional Census and Surveys Advisory Service, and, in the interest of TCDC, to look into the possibility of having that financed by the countries themselves.

162. The Committee welcomed the report, and further information on the development of software by their respective agencies was provided by the representatives of the United States of America, the United Kingdom and the United Nations Statistical Office. Participants were informed that these agencies were engaged in the development of modified versions of existing programmes so that they could be extensively used in developing countries.

163. It was recognized that most countries experienced difficulty in the staffing of their data processing establishments, and it was agreed that some effort should be made to appoint an additional regional adviser in data processing and to provide a directory of EDP experts in the region which should include particulars of their qualifications and background.

164. There was some discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of mini-computers. It was agreed that although such computers were flexible it was often difficult to obtain proper servicing facilities and standard software which was available for traditional type equipment could not be had for mini-computers. It was agreed that these problems should be weighed carefully against the cost factor.

165. It was observed that the aspect of statisticians with knowledge of electronic data processing had not been covered by the report, and some interest was expressed in the EDP courses for statisticians being mounted by the CESD, Paris. The Committee was informed that the question of cooperation between EDP personnel and statisticians was crucial and it took time to have the latter understand computers. The meeting was informed that further efforts were being devoted to the development of useful courses. It was agreed that the ECA secretariat would be kept abreast of all such developments.

Economic Statistics (Agenda item 13)

(a) The status and uses of the UN system of National Accounts (SNA) in Africa

166. For its consideration of agenda item 13(a), the Committee had before it document E/CN.14/PSD.1/19. In introducing the document the secretariat noted that the report was the second attempt by the ECA secretariat to evaluate the status of implementation and uses of the revised UN System of National Accounts in the region, and that both attempts were made at the request of the eighth and tenth sessions of the Conference of African Statisticians respectively. The document attempted to detail the present status of compilation of the different accounts and tables of the SNA in countries of the region and the uses to which the data are being put.

167. The Committee endorsed the view that progress in the implementation of the revised SNA in some countries in the region was not as rapid as had been hoped and that the number of countries which have attempted implementing the system, either through the actual compilation of selected accounts and tables of the SNA or through the use of the SNA as a framework for the formulation of data collection programme or the use of the SNA definitions and classifications in the collection and compilation of data, was growing but still small.

168. A question was raised as to whether it will be practicable to compile for African economies the supplementary accounts and tables the SNA suggest that developing countries may find of value to compile. In reply the secretariat expressed the view that since the rural areas of most countries in the region will account for a major part of the population and production of their economy it may be worthwhile to attempt to compile these supplementary accounts and tables in view of the emerging new requirements of disaggregation at sub-regional level for local planning purposes.

169. Several delegations cited the shortage of trained staff as a major cause for the rather slow progress of the implementation of the SNA in the region. The secretariat informed the meeting that under its project of assistance to Least Developed countries (LDCs) and Newly Independent countries (NICs) in National Accounts, a training course is planned to take place in Rabat from 19-30 May 1980. In addition to participants from the above group of countries, seven other countries which suffer from a great lack of trained personnel in the field of national accounts have been invited to participate in the training.

170. Attention was drawn to the fact that countries which have made rapid progress in the implementation of the SNA were the countries that have received bilateral or international assistance from the United Nations through the provision of country experts as well as periodic assistance from the regional advisory services of the ECA and the organization of technical meetings. Several delegations expressed gratitude for the assistance and expressed the hope that such assistance will continue. The programme of assistance to LDCs and NICs in national accounts was cited and the hope expressed that the project will continue after June 1981 and that a second regional adviser on national accounts will be appointed.

171. The Committee emphasized the importance of national account statistics for economic and social analysis and planning and requested the ECA secretariat to undertake for the next session of the Conference another review on the progress achieved by them in the implementation of the revised UN System of National Accounts in the region.

172. The representative of U.K. informed the Committee that social accounting matrices had been prepared for three African countries by a team of experts from British technical assistance.

173. The view was expressed that national accounts was a very important topic for statisticians and planners, etc. and that it should have been taken at the plenary session of the Joint Conference so as to enable planners to express their views on the subject and indicate the extent of use of the SNA in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of development plans in countries of the region.

(b) Working Group on Price Statistics

174. In introducing the document E/CN.14/PSD.1/20, "Report of the Working Group on Price Statistics", a member of the secretariat pointed out the main objectives of convening such a working group recommended by the last Conference of African Statisticians. The main task of the group was to identify price data requirements in the region, to draw up a comprehensive plan for the development of an integrated price statistics system and to recommend suitable methodologies to be adopted by African countries.

175. Selected topics on price statistics covering various subject matters were discussed at length by the group and many gaps and shortcomings identified. These have been listed in the report for the countries to consider when developing their price data. International and regional requirements which included the International Comparison Project (ICP) were also discussed. Its results will facilitate the inter-country comparisons of the main national accounts aggregates which in turn will give a more accurate measurement of national levels of development. Twelve countries in the region (seven French-speaking and five English-speaking) are participating in the fourth phase of the project.

176. The Working Group drew up a suggested programme of work for the guidance of the countries. This programme is divided into three sections (a) the conceptual and methodological framework, (b) structure and content of substantive work and (c) organization and implementation of activities. Countries are expected to decide on their own priorities when implementing this programme, taking into account their needs, patterns of economic activities and other resources at their disposal.

177. On the question of the programme of work, the Committee felt that part (a) was rather too vague and general in nature and therefore could not be regarded as a programme of work by the countries. It stressed that ECA should be more active in assisting countries.

178. Regarding the coordination of work on price statistics often undertaken by various departments in a country, the Committee felt that this work should be coordinated at the index-calculation rather than at the price collection level. The Committee also felt that priority should be given to the building up and improvement of basic statistics rather than putting emphasis on sophisticated statistics. The importance of trade indexes was highlighted and the unreliability of unit value emphasised.

179. The need for a regional adviser in price statistics was emphasised by the Committee. The secretariat mentioned that the problem lay with the availability of funds and should funding become assured, the services of such an adviser would be supplied. Bilateral exchange of experts could also be explored.

(c) External Trade Statistics

180. A table showing availability of external trade data was distributed for consideration by the Committee. In introducing the agenda item the secretariat reviewed the deliberations of the 10th session of the Conference of African Statisticians, pointing to the urgent need for timeliness of external trade statistics, standardisation in such areas as coverage, partner classification and systems of trade among other things, and the need for countries to compile indexes of external trade. Countries were requested to send their publications to ECA through UNDP and copies of their magnetic tapes direct to the United Nations Statistical Office, its trade Statistics Branch in Geneva or direct to ECA. The secretariat then informed the Committee of recent developments at the ECA secretariat leading to the setting up of an external trade statistics

magnetic tape data base, and the adoption by the secretariat of the United Nations Standard Country Code. The recommendations of the working group on price statistics with particular reference to the need for a pragmatic approach in the compilation of external trade indexes and the need for studies in their compilation had also been noted by the secretariat.

181. The representative of the United Nations Statistical Office also expressed its concern over the timeliness of external trade statistics data and invited countries to contact UNSO to determine the type of assistance that could be made available to enhance timeliness in delivery of trade statistics. The representative of UNSO also reminded countries to consider using the Standard International Trade Classification Rev. 2 in their external trade statistics.

182. The Committee agreed that there was a serious need for basic external trade statistics to become available on a timely basis and felt that the problem lay in the collection and processing of the data. The secretariat was then requested to undertake a study of data collection procedures examining basic records and documentation as well as the flow of these documents from ports of exit/entry up to and including the processing stage. The secretariat was further requested also to make an appraisal of the quality and coverage of the data generated and a review of the comparability of external trade statistics and related data within individual countries by examination of the documentation used by the customs authorities, port authorities, the Central Bank and the Ministry of Commerce.

183. The Committee also indicated interest in knowing the commodity nomenclatures countries use at the collection point, and the stage at which conversion was effected into other nomenclatures.

184. The representative of the EEC (European Economic Community) indicated that technical assistance as well as assistance on software was available from the EEC, and further indicated that documentation on its external trade statistics data bank was available on request. The representative of the United Kingdom (U.K.) also informed the Committee on the availability of technical assistance from the U.K. and the U.K. was rather prepared to discuss with interested countries the possibility of using, with appropriate remote terminals, processing facilities in other countries through satellite communications.

(d) Seminar on distribution statistics

185. The Committee had before it document E/CN.14/PSD.1/21, entitled "Report of the Seminar on Distribution Statistics".

186. Participants paid particular attention to the conclusions and recommendations reached at the Seminar held in Addis Ababa from 13 to 17 November 1978. They involved the following points:

(a) Need and uses of distributive - trade statistics;

(b) Scope and coverage of surveys;

(c) Information to be collected and definitions;

(d) Data collection procedure;

(e) Future work programme.

187. The Committee stressed the importance of the distributive-trade-and-services sector which had grown rapidly in Africa and pointed out the lack of statistical information in that field. It therefore endorsed the recommendation of the Seminar that a working group should be convened in 1981 or 1982 to study in greater depth problems related to distributive-trades and services statistics. It also invited the ECA secretariat to undertake a study on the measures to take to deal satisfactorily with the category pedlars and ambulant traders.

188. In connexion with problems of collecting data in the distributive-trades-and-services sector, the committee referred to the difficulties involved in finding an adequate sample base, i.e., the volume of production handled by the distributive-trades sector, in order to obtain viable data. In that respect, the secretariat suggested the selection of an area sample base for small units with enumeration taking place at the site of the establishments chosen should be divided into 12 sub-groups with each group being observed for one month a year. That method would improve the quality of responses substantially.

189. The problem of mixed enterprises was raised. The secretariat pointed out that only resale activities were to be considered when studying the distributive-trade sector.

190. The Committee also underscored that it was helpful to use household surveys as a complement to verify the area sample base, the comparability of data and making the population more aware of that field.

(e) Industry and construction statistics

191. The secretariat gave an account of the development of industrial, building and public works statistics in the African region, and drew the attention of the Committee to the fact that the progress made over the last eight years could hardly be said to be satisfactory in the light of the aims of the 1973 World Industrial Statistics Programme. The medium- and long-term activities to be carried out in countries should aim, inter alia, at gradually establishing integrated industrial statistics systems, improving the quality, coverage and methods of using the data, improving data collection from small establishments, ensuring rapid publication and wide dissemination of the results of all inquiries and strengthening training activities.

192. The secretariat also emphasized that development programmes for industrial, building and public works statistics should be designed as an integral part of the efforts to be made to develop the national statistical system as a whole; the need for effective co-ordination between those programmes and that on establishing a household survey system was also stressed. Finally, the secretariat pointed out that standardized accounting in the undertakings in some 15 countries had been shown to be a highly satisfactory approach to the collection of annual economic statistics.

193. The observer from UNIDO then presented the main conclusions reached in document UNIDO/ICIS.117, prepared by the UNIDO secretariat. That document dealt with recent industrial developments in Africa, and showed statistically the state of industrialization of the region. The main gaps and deficiencies in the available data were clearly brought out. The UNIDO observer laid particular emphasis on the need to give high priority to the development of African industrial statistics, in view of the ever increasing importance of industrial policy in the region.

194. The Committee congratulated the secretariat for its accurate analysis of the situation as well as for the appropriate recommendations it had made regarding the establishment of medium and long-term national programmes for the development of industrial statistics in countries of the region. The Committee acknowledged that the preparation of national industrial repertories was one of the priority tasks that needed to be undertaken and that it would be most effective for the countries to adopt a uniform system of registering enterprises and establishments.

195. Most participants felt that standardizing enterprise and establishment accounts through the adoption of a single accounting plan would go a long way to improving data quality and making information more speedily available. It was suggested that the question should be considered in greater detail at the next session of the Committee.

196. The Committee stressed the need for complete and reliable information on small industrial units in view of the extent of their activities in many countries in the region. An appropriate method of collecting data on those units needed to be worked out. In that connexion the secretariat informed the Committee that the indicative world industrial statistics programme for 1983 included specific recommendations on the organization and conduct of surveys on family industries

and that the question would be discussed in greater detail by the working group on industrial statistics planned for 1981. The representative of France informed the Committee of the findings of a similar survey conducted in Tunisia with his country's assistance. That survey had provided an appropriate definition of the informal sector.

197. Finally, the Committee emphasised the need to set up a programme of assistance to the countries of the region as part of the 1983 world programme of industrial statistics. The United Kingdom representative stated that his country had already arranged to extend technical assistance to the countries of the region as part of the programme. It was pointed out, however, that while UNDP should play a vital role in that regard, very often African Governments did not give enough priority to statistics in their national indicative planning figures. It was suggested that a draft resolution on the matter should be submitted by the Joint Conference of Planners, Statisticians and Demographers to the next meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers.

(f) Other economic statistics

198. Under agenda item 13 (f) relating to other economic statistics, the Committee had before it the results of a study on production of and trade in selected agricultural commodities and a brief report on the current status of transport and tourism statistics in Africa and on the secretariat's activities in that field.

199. The study on the production of and trade in selected agricultural commodities was issued in French, with a short summary in English in African Statistical Newsletter Nos. 12 and 13. The commodities covered were cocoa, coffee, cotton, groundnuts, oilpalm and wood.

200. The current status of transport statistics was assessed in the light of information contained in material published by national statistical services. The following modes of transport were reviewed: maritime transport, rail transport, air transport and road transport. The secretariat's statistical activities in those were also reviewed. The current status of tourism statistics in Africa was also brought up.

201. The Committee urged countries to provide the information that had been requested which was necessary for the preparation of the special African Newsletter on transport and communications. It stressed the need for a similar study to the one it had considered on foodstuffs. While recognizing the need to improve statistics on the vehicle fleet as a matter of priority, the Committe suggested that other data on road transport should be collected. It also stressed the improtance of knowing Africa's share in air transport.

202. The Committee regretted the fact that the agenda proposed for it did not include an item on the status of agricultural statistics in Africa as the agenda for previous meetings had done.

203. The Committee suggested that a seminar should be organized on methods of preparing tourism statistics and invited the secretariat to organize a workshop on transport and communications, with the countries concerned even participating to its financing if necessary.

Programme of work in statistics (Agenda item 14)

204. The Committee considered the future programme of work contained in Annex I of document E/CN.14/PSD.1/11. It was noted that this included the programme which had already been approved by the ECA Conference of Ministers, with provisional extension through 1986.

205. The following amendments, based mainly on the earlier discussions of the Committee, were agreed:

Project No.	
9.541.02	A working group on statistical organization should be included in 1981.
9.543.02	The next report on implementation of the System of National Accounts should be prepared in 1981 rather than 1985.
9.543.07	The project to examine statistical relationships betweeen economic aggregates should be deleted because this work was now covered by the socio-economic research and planning sector of the ECA programme.
9.544.01	An investigation of the current status of trade statistics, including reasons for delayed dissemination of data, should be included.
9.547.03	Provision of French language training workshops for civil registration personnel should be deleted because these projects would be mounted by OCAM in collaboration with ECA.
9.548.03	The first training workshop on statistical software packages should be held in 1982 instead of 1983. It could possibly be linked with the more general meeting on data processing in the same year under project 9.541.04.

206. Several participants requested that the working group to consider data on small scale and household industries should be advanced from 1985 to 1982 because of their importance in the forthcoming world programme of industrial statistics. The United States representative mentioned the possibility of assistance in this area of development. It was agreed that the secretariat would aim at organizing the working group in 1982.

207. It was further agreed that project 9.541.02 should be modified to incorporate an assessment of the effectiveness of national statistical services. The project should also include work on the establishment of an African list of statistical priorities. In connexion with the latter the United Kingdom representative indicated that useful material was available from the seminar held at the Munich centre in 1979.

208. It was pointed out by the secretariat that the amendments described above would lead to a concentration of meetings in 1981 and 1982. ECA would nevertheless make every effort to fulfil the requirements specified by the Committee.

209. In connexion with the linkage already established between the African Household Survey Capability Programme (AHSCP) and the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA) it was suggested that on-the-job attachments should be organized for African statisticians wishing to study and participate in the survey programmes of other African countries. This was clearly consistent with the principles of TCDC and would assist in meeting training requirements. The secretariat agreed to study the matter on the basis of proposals for the assignment of individual persons.

210. Because the Committee's agenda had contained no specific item on agriculture, doubts were expressed about whether agricultural surveys were being given sufficient attention. It was pointed out that agriculture already had a significant place in the survey programmes of several countries and was a matter of major concern in the development of AHSCP. FAO had begun active participation through the part-time services of an expert assigned to the AHSCP regional component. The United States representative drew attention to a Guyana experiment in collection of some agricultural data in the current population census, which might provide a frame for agricultural surveys and a better linkage between agricultural and other data.

211. The representative of the UN Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) reported on collaboration with ECA, particularly in the area of data exchange which had been of benefit for both the Yearbook for Arab States and the information available at ECA. Future collaboration could be expected in a number of areas including the International Comparison Project and the global National Household Survey Capability Programme. The Committee expressed the wish that such collaboration should be further developed.

212. The representative of the African Development Bank (ADB) briefly described the needs of the Bank with respect to statistics and information on national development plans. In this connexion collaboration with member countries, the participating states, ECA, World Bank, and other agencies was of special importance. It was noted that an ADB mission had visited ECA in 1979 and had established arrangements for exchange of data and other activities which would ensure continuing contact between the two agencies.

213. Finally the Committee considered the possibility of reviving the Association of African Statisticians which had been established some years previously but, for various practical reasons, had not achieved an operational status. The secretariat was requested to look into the matter and circulate a report to African countries. The report would include the constitution previously agreed and an assessment of the financial prospects for the Association. The possibility of affiliating the Association to the International Statistical Institute would also be investigated. It was emphasised that ECA would have to play a leading role in establishing the Association in its initial stages. The matter will be considered at the next session of the Conference.

DEMOGRAPHY COMMITTEE

214. The first meeting of the Committee of Demographers was held on the 26 March to consider the items on its agenda. It was opened by Mr. Lamine Diop (Senegal) in his capacity as Chairman of the third session of the Conference of African Demographers.

215. The following officers were elected :

- Chairman : M.S.C. Mulenga, Zambia
- Vice-Chairman : Cheikh Guldsidi, Mauritania
- Rapporteur : A.M. MPITI, Lesotho

Matters arising from the other United Nations meetings (agenda item 16)

216. The secretariat presented the results of the activities of the fourteenth session of the Economic Commission for Africa held in Rabat in February-March 1979, the deliberations of the twentieth session of the United Nations Population Commission, held in New York in January-February 1979 and the report of the Expert Group Meeting on Fertility, Mortality Levels, Patterns and Trends in Africa, held in Monrovia in 1979.

217. In its deliberations on the economic and social strategy for Africa the Conference of Ministers had taken population variables into consideration. The plan of action adopted, considered the high levels of mortality and fertility, accelerated rates of urbanization, the impossibility of meeting social needs of large segments of the population, mainly in health, education, shelter, food, employment; uneven chances for development and access to modern technology for women and others.

218. The Commission had adopted resolutions on priorities set in the ECA work programme on the relationship between population growth and social and economic development, information and documentation, and training in population studies.

219. The twentieth session of the Population Commission had focused its deliberations on two important areas : an evaluation of the implementation of the Population World Plan of Action and the work programme in population.

220. The Population Commission had proposed to the Economic and Social Council two draft resolutions, which had been endorsed by the latter, aimed respectively at reinforcing measures for the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action and identifying priority areas of action derived from the report on the monitoring and appraisal of the progress achieved in the implementation of the Plan.

221. The discussion which followed focused on information and clearinghouse schemes, migration, technical assistance and the idea of a second world conference on population. It was recognized that more progress was still to be achieved on the methodology and knowledge of migration movements. The Committee was informed that RIPS and ILO had undertaken some work in the field. It was recommended that the results of such investigations ought to be disseminated more broadly.

222. It was recognized that the secretariat was satisfactorily implementing the resolutions of the Conference of Ministers of ECA.

223. The secretariat introduced the final report of the Expert Group Meeting on Fertility and Mortality Levels Patterns and Trends. Subsequently a detailed examination of the 14 major recommendations made by the meeting was presented to the Committee for consideration and comments.

224. Discussing the report the Committee made comments on the inadequacy of health statistics and, in particular, data on the causes of death. It was noted that not enough importance had been attached to the collection of such data in the past mainly because administrative as well as household records had not been fruitful sources of information on the continent. Pointing out that illiteracy was not necessarily a big impediment to the collection of data on the causes of death, it was advocated that there should be a shift towards developing decentralized and less traditional systems of data collection. In that regard, simplified methods such as those already tried out at IRSAC on the registration of the causes of death and the WHO key reporting systems were cited as possible useful examples. However, it was also noted that while using such less conventional methods, efforts should be made to strengthen the use of existing conventional techniques.

225. Attention was drawn to the multiplicity of tasks called for by the recommendations of the Monrovia meeting and it was suggested that, given the limited resources of ECA, there was the need to involve as many other organizations as possible in their execution. In that connexion, therefore, ECA as well as participating in the implementation of the recommendations was to serve as the focal point of co-ordination, guidance and leadership to ensure the rational utilization of scarce resources.

226. An interesting debate on the relative advantage of breast feeding took place. Several participants spoke in favour of the practice, noting the concern expressed at several international fora that the practice was being discarded especially in urban based families. It was therefore suggested that efforts should be directed at organizing courses and information systems designed to encourage women to breastfeed while at the same time encouraging Governments to promulgate favourable labour laws which granted free time to employed nursing mothers to breastfeed their children. Such working women should support breast with artificial feeding since the breast milk might not after some months be sufficient. Nevertheless because of the high cost of artificial milk which might not be within the reach of poor families in particular, it was necessary to consider the use of other reinforced African weaning food substitutes.

227. The activities of the Sahel Institute in the field of population and development and in the area of demographic research were presented to the committee. ECA welcomed the existence of those programmes which had the support of the Governments of the sub-region and called for collaboration in the implementation of the work programme suggested by those activities.

228. In view of the static nature of some economic forecasts and the use of often out-dated monolithic rates of population growth and change, a call was made for greater ingenuity in the collection and analysis of demographic data in such a way as to provide urgently needed data for planning. The need for more decentralized systems of data collection and analysis which would permit the monitoring of progress in development at various levels, particularly the local one, was stressed. That required systems of social analysis and reporting as an input into national plan formulation and implementation.

229. Much interest was also expressed in the isolation of the causes and consequences of sterility and infertility in some parts of the region. It was agreed that, although several causes had been identified by different researchers, it was still necessary to identify the critical ones since they were interrelated. A useful approach therefore would require an integrated multidisciplinary study of the problem which would then lead to much a more structured attack on the causes. In that regard, the collaboration of ECA and WHO with countries of the region was considered desirable.

Research and studies : /Agenda item 17 (a)/

230. The secretariat reminded the Committee that it had inherited the responsibilities of the former Conference of African Demographers which included the review of the Commission's in the field of population. The work of the secretariat in the field of population embraced the creation of awareness within the region of the implications of population trends for development, assistance to Governments in the analysis of demographic data, encouraging the integration of population variables in development plans and support for the training of nationals in both United Nations and non United Nations centres.

231. Before reporting on past and on-going activities in the field of population, the secretariat drew attention to the continuing constraints on the secretariat in the effective implementation and expansion of its programme of activities. The major constraint in that regard had been the scarcity of resources, mainly manpower, since neither the regular budget of the secretariat nor the UNFPA budget had been flexible enough to accommodate additional staff requirements.

232. The secretariat gave a detailed report on both completed and continuing research and study projects, which were in three categories : those completed or being undertaken at the request of some Governments of the region; those which were specifically prepared and fed into meetings either organized by the secretariat or by other agencies interested in population work in Africa; and those which were being done routinely as a means of monitoring the demographic situation and accompanying changes.

233. The focus of the projects covered fertility and mortality and population projections and estimates. Two survey activities which were continuing were the processing of the survey on the interrelationships among infant and childhood mortality, socio economic variables and fertility in Zambia and the analysis of the results of the series of demographic surveys designed to provide data for planning and the new Federal capital of Nigeria. Work on the preparation of the report on the demographic survey of households and living conditions was well advanced.

224. The Committee was also informed of the secretariat's participation in the United Nations Minimum Programme for the Comparative Analysis of the World Fertility Survey (WFS) Data. The analysis, to be co-ordinated form the Population Division in New York, would be based on WFS first reports for the countries concerned and would use similar and standard techniques of analysis as well as investigate certain topics and hypotheses with a view to promoting comparability among countries and regions. The active participation of the ECA secretariat in that joint project had been hampered by the data processing delays in releasing first reports by participating countries of the region.

225. The report on the macro and micro case studies on the interrelationship between population and development drew attention to the difficulties of recruiting suitable national experts to undertake the studies. Efforts were currently directed to the publication of the studies completed in the past. The macro case study on Kenya was already published while that on the Ivory Coast was already in press. Following the review of the progress of the project by a consultant appointed by the secretariat it was expected that the project would be overhauled in order to make it deal adequately and more effectively with population development interrelationships.

226. The national seminars organized for countries for which case studies had been prepared had been held in the review period only in the United Republic of Tanzania with the participation of experts from neighbouring countries. The one being planned for Guinea in the very near future would also involve experts from some of its neighbouring countries. Because the seminars were regarded as national projects by UNFPA, ECA initially collaborated with the countries only in the formulation of the projects for submission for funding. When the projects had been approved the secretariat worked closely with the national experts to ensure their proper implementation.

227. At the request of the Committee, clarification was given about the current staff strengthen of the secretariat, its distribution and deployment within the various sections of the Population Division. It was noted that some reappraisal of the staff situation had been made recently and that the need for additional staff was quite obvious.

228. Some of the problems inherent in the limitations of data and hypotheses for projections prepared for the region by the secretariat were discussed. It was observed that there were generally insufficient bases for the formulation of hypotheses and that very often the data base was weak. In particular, while it had proved relatively easy to obtain data and formulate hypotheses for fertility and mortality, it had been difficult to do the same for migration. In the interest of meeting the requirements of individual countries, the projections of the secretariat were done nationally and sectorally for each country of the region before proceeding to obtain aggregate estimates for subregions and the region in general. That was done to obviate the danger of using global aggregates to derive national situations.

229. The importance of strengthening the data supply situation in the region through censuses and vital registration was recognized. It was felt that the use of surveys, which very often were limited in scope and coverage, should not in any way minimize the need for censuses and vital registration as means of obtaining more detailed demographic information. ECA was therefore called upon not only to undertake more work

on censuses but also to put greater emphasis on the promotion of vital registration systems. Efforts in that direction did not have to begin on a large scale. Indeed, the establishment of sample registration areas, depending on the prevailing circumstances, might be a useful beginning.

Population information service and clearinghouse activities : /agenda item 17 (b)/

240. The secretariat reported that considerable progress had been made during the year under review. Publication of the African Population Newsletter had continued, but owing to production difficulties the secretariat had had to combine two issues (Nos. 30 and 31) in order to minimize delays. In view of those bottlenecks the secretariat proposed that only two issues per year should be put out in future until the problem of reproduction delays had been resolved. The African Population Studies Series No. 3 had been published containing two studies by the ECA Population Division on "Fertility levels patterns and differentials in Africa and their implications for economic and social development" and "Fertility, education and population growth in Africa".

241. A new edition of the Demographic Handbook for Africa had also been published, while work was proceeding on the revision of the African Directory of Demographers. It was expected that the revised version of the directory would be ready soon. In that regard the secretariat urged those demographers who had not completed the data forms for the Directory to do so before the end of the meeting. A case study (in English) on the relationship between population and socio-economic development in Kenya had been published during the year. A second case study (in French) on the Ivory Coast had been completed and was expected from the printers soon. The secretariat had also published a pamphlet in French and English on "Selected population indicators for African countries for the period 1970-2000."

242. In addition to publications, the Population Division had continued to respond to requests for population information from the region. The secretariat also noted that translation work was lagging behind because of a lack of resources. It commended the important work being done by independent organizations in translating population and related documents into either French or English.

243. The secretariat noted that the Population Division's Documentation Unit had been reorganized during the year in an effort to expand and improve its services. A Consultant had been hired, who with the assistance of a staff member from the United Nations Population Division, New York, had reorganized the Documentation Unit and set up a system of continuous indexing and cataloguing. That had greatly improved the efficiency of the unit. In order to improve upon and expand the services of the Population information service and clearinghouse unit a new project document has been submitted to UNFPA for the period 1980-1983.

244. The secretariat appealed to participants to assist in that aspect of its work by providing information, particularly for the African Population Newsletter. The secretariat would welcome non-technical articles on population and any news items from national newspapers for publication in the newsletter.

245. The representatives of the United Nations-sponsored demographic research and training institutes presented reports on their activities in the area of population information and documentation.

246. The representatives of the Institut de formation et de recherche démographiques (IFORD) reported that IFORD had three types of publications - Annales de l'IFORD, Bulletin de Liaison and African Population. The representative explained that the journal "Annales de l'IFORD" contained a synthesis of work undertaken by students and staff researchers at IFORD. The Bulletin de Liaison, originally published by the French Group of African Demographers in Paris, had been taken over by IFORD in 1979 with financial support from the French Government. The third publication "African Population" was the latest journal to be published by IFORD and the first issue was expected to be ready by July. The journal was expected to publish scientific work by demographers from French-speaking African countries.

247. The Director of the Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS), Accra, noted that his Institute's publications programme was being hampered by a lack of financial resources and delays in printing. The Institute published the RIPS Newsletter which contains information on internal activities of the Institute. Back issues of the newsletter were still at the printers pending the release of funds. The other journal published by RIPS was "African Demography", an English version of the former Bulletin de Liaison originally published by the French Group in Paris. That journal is produced in collaboration with IFORD which now published the French version. African Demography contains information on current research in the African region, movements of demographers and other relevant information on demographic research in the region. Two issues of the journal were in the press.

248. As part of the work of the Information Services Unit of the Institute, a Population Information and Documentation System for Africa (PIDSA) had been started in 1978. With funds from International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the unit published PIDSA Abstracts. The third issue of PIDSA Abstracts was in the press and the fourth was in preparation. Two issues of the Abstracts had already appeared. A PIDSA newsletter would be issued soon. PIDSA Abstracts contained abstracts and bibliographic information in both English and French.

249. The Director of RIPS further reported that PIDSA had developed a manual bibliographic and abstractive system and plans were in progress to computerize the system. Regarding the Institute's publication programme, the Director noted that 48 studies and four books were ready for publication. It was hoped that ECA would assist the Institute in soliciting funds for the Institute's publications programme.

250. The discussion udnerscored the importance of population information work being undertaken by ECA and the regional institutes and the need to expand and improve that service. Specific concern was expressed regarding the improvement of country coverage of research activities being undertaken, the need to overcome bottlenecks in translation of documents and delays in distribution.

251. It was also felt that greater co-ordination was needed among those involved in population information work. The representative of France highlighted the important work being undertaken in France by the Group of African Demographers in the translation and publication of studies and research in demography. The representative of the Congo expressed concern over the distribution of documents and urged ECA to provide the co-ordination needed in the distribution of documents.

252. In response the secretariat informed participants of efforts being made to overcome the problems discussed.

Training and research /Agenda item 17 (c)/

253. Introducing the item the secretariat informed the Committee that it continued backstopping the activities of the Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS) in Accra, Ghana, and the Institut de formation et de recherche démographiques (IFORD) in Yaoundé, United Republic of Cameroon. The secretariat still continued to be involved also in the activities of the Cairo Demographic Centre of whose Advisory Committee ECA was still a member. All three institutes had continued to expand on their activities during the period under review and to be more involved in the countries they served through the increasing number of research activities being undertaken either on the initiative of the institutes or on the request of the Governments concerned. Both the Cairo Demographic Centre and RIPS had started courses leading to a Ph. D. degree, although, on the advice of the advisory committees of the institutes, those courses were to be maintained on a small scale. The secretariat appealed to member States to take full advantage of the facilities available at the regional training institutes in Africa to train personnel for population work in their countries.

254. The secretariat informed the meeting that the management of IFORD and RIPS had been decentralized from United Nations Headquarters to ECA since January 1980, which imposed extra responsibilities on ECA in the backstopping of the institutes. The secretariat assured the host Governments, the United Republic of Cameroon and Ghana that all that the decentralization meant was that the responsibility for the administration of the two institutes had been transferred to ECA. It did not imply in any way any change in the terms of the agreements signed by the host Governments and the United Nations governing the operations of the institutes. The responsibilities and/or privileges which the agreements conferred on the parties or signatories to the agreements remained the same.

255. The secretariat has already initiated action aimed at implementing the recommendations of Conference of Ministers resolution 367(XIV) on the full regionalization of IFORD and RIPS. In that regard the secretariat had started negotiations with the host Governments on the mounting of missions to the countries served by the institutes to explain and solicit support for the regionalization of the institutes, which in effect would mean that all the countries would contribute to the financial support of the institutes and participate in the governing councils of the institutes. Draft statutes and agreements to govern the institutes after the regionalization had been prepared and were to be discussed by the Committee.

256. The meeting was finally informed of the secretariat's continued assistance to the East African Statistical Training Centre, at Dar-es-Salaam, in its training programme in demography and of a middle-level training course organized for the staff of the Census and Statistics Department of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

257. The representative of ITORD informed the meeting that the main course was of two years' duration and aimed at providing countries with experts who could undertake data collection and analysis and interpretation of the data and understand the relationship between population variables and development. The Institute had since its establishment trained over 100 such experts. The Institute also gave courses in demography students of geography, economics and sociology and organized seminars and workshops for experts in different fields. There were also plans to organize refresher courses for demographers of the French-speaking African countries.

258. The research activities at the Institute had started only two years earlier after a meeting of experts had delineated the priority areas for the Institute. The first priority areas were studies on infant mortality the development of demographic concepts suitable for the African region, the evaluation of the 1970 round of censuses, study of population structure by age and sex; civil registration and fertility. The second priority topics were mortality, population and socio-economic issues causes of rural exodus and laws governing migration in the countries.

259. The Institute had already started surveys on infant mortality in the United Republic of Cameroon, Togo, Chad, the Congo and the Republic of Benin. Work had also been started on the development of demographic concepts suitable for African countries.

260. Among the difficulties facing the Institute were shortage of staff and the competition which the Institute faced from institutions outside the region which deprived the Institute of students.

261. The Director of RIPS informed the meeting of the introduction of a Ph.D. programme for which there were at present two students in addition to the one-year Post graduate Diploma and the M.A. degree course at the Institute. He regretted the fact that countries were not making full use of the facilities at the Institute to train their nationals and that not all the places and fellowships were always taken up. Although all the countries, except Botswana, had sent students to the Institute at one time or the other there was still the need for countries to make better use of the facilities. In the area of research the Institute's Governing Council had approved a programme which included a survey on mortality using the CELADE method to show how it would work in African conditions and a migration survey. The Institute has also started research on historical demography in Africa which was already yielding very interesting and useful results on the development of demography in the region.

262. On the problems facing the Institute, the Director mentioned the difficulties in the printing of the Institute's documents which delayed publications, the scarcity of computer facilities which delayed the processing of data from various surveys and staffing problems. Although the level of staffing had improved over the past year there was still much room for improvement. He had therefore started a training scheme with the help of the host Government whereby the best students of the Institute were being given further post-graduate training to prepare them for work at the Institute.

263. The meeting was also informed of training in population field outside the region in the United States, the Soviet Union and France.

264. In the discussions that followed, one participant asked why there seemed to be differences in the courses offered by IFORD and RIPS. It was explained that, although the two institutes aimed at providing their trainees with the same type of expertise, there were bound to be differences because of the basic historical differences in the French- and the English-speaking systems of education from which the two institutes derived their origin. Participants also pointed out the difficulties which students of IFORD had with regard to the recognition of their diplomas by the different national Governments. Another problem was the period of training at IFORD which made it difficult for certain Governments to release students for training and recognize their diplomas after their training. The secretariat was asked to do something about those problems. The secretariat advised that the best means of dealing with them would be for the Director, with the assistance of the Advisory Committee (on which the countries were represented), to find solutions acceptable to all countries concerned.

265. It was suggested that the institutes should consider organizing short-term courses for planners as a means of enhancing awareness of the relationship between population and development. On the causes of the underutilization of the facilities at the institutes it was suggested that ECA and the institutes should mount a publicity campaign in the countries to inform them of the facilities available and encourage them to make use of them. An appeal was made to ECA to help RIPS obtain a mini-computer and an off-set litho press to enable the Institute overcome its data processing and printing problems. The ILO representative informed the meeting of the wide experience his organization had acquired over the years in the migration field especially in the methodology for estimating levels of migration. His organization could, upon request, collaborate with the institutes in their work in that field.

266. On the issue of full regionalization of the institutes, one participant wanted to know why the ECA secretariat wanted all countries to contribute towards the financing of the activities of IFORD and RIPS and whether the host Governments had complained of being overburdened. The secretariat was warned of the danger of jeopardizing the institutes' future as a result of the inability of the countries to pay their alloted contributions after the regionalization as had happened with some other regional institutions. The representative of the United Republic of Cameroon replied that his Government was finding it increasingly difficult to shoulder the burden alone since the budget of IFORD was rising at a considerably higher rate than the budget of his country. For that reason the Governing Council of IFORD had decided to approach other Governments on the need for all Governments served by the Institute to contribute to its support. The secretariat said it was aware of the problem and that every effort would be made to ensure the availability of funds before the new statutes came into effect. The secretariat hoped that the countries would try to meet their responsibilities fully. Finally, it was recommended that ECA should introduce middle-level training courses in the existing Statistical Training Centres.

Advisory services /Agenda item 17 (d)/

267. Introducing the section on advisory services, the secretariat presented an account of assistance it had provided to various countries of the region during the period under review. Countries assisted included the following: Mauritius, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Somalia, Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi, Djibouti, Algeria, Malawi, Nigeria, the Ivory Coast, Senegal, Guinea, the Congo, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Ethiopia. The assistance provided included analysis of demographic data, formulation of project documents for UNFPA funding of census programmes or national seminars, formulation of population policies, participation in the UNFPA Needs Assessment Missions and the organization and servicing of national seminars.

268. The assistance to member States cited above had been provided by various members of the Population Division including the two regional advisers currently on board. UNFPA had provided one more post of regional adviser to make a total of three posts. Two of the regional advisers would be outposted to the MULPOC areas and arrangements for the outposting were under way. An appeal was made by the secretariat to participants to make maximum use of those advisory services from the subregions when the outposting had been implemented.

269. Following the appeal made at the third session of the Conference of African Demographers that ECA should be more outgoing to identify needs of member States, a view which had been approved by the Conference of Ministers in Rabat in 197[illegible], it had contacted all member States to supply information on their needs so that ECA could plan how to provide assistance accordingly. The response from member States had been rather disappointing since some 35 countries had not replied at all. That made it very difficult for ECA to be more outgoing. In the past some attempts had been made to initiate missions to member States but they were not welcome without a specific request from the countries concerned.

270. Another handicap cited by the secretariat in providing assistance was the lack of up-to-date information of various activities in census operations. The secretariat therefore appealed to participants to communicate periodically progress and problems in census activities to ECA so that the secretariat might be in a better position to help. Another problem which had made it difficult to assist member States in census analysis had been data processing difficulties and delays.

271. Finally, the secretariat strongly appealed to participants to indicate their needs during the Conference so that ECA could accordingly plan how to provide assistance to the countries concerned.

272. The director of RIPS briefed the Committee on assistance it was providing to the Governments of Nigeria and Libya in collaboration with ECA and assistance with supervision of Sudanese nationals in analysing the 1973 Population census. The director felt that member States were not making full use of the assistance of experts available at the Institute. The Institute would be willing to assist with short-term training at the middle level for countries or groups of countries. The representative of IFORD pointed out that countries were informed of assistance it could provide, however only the Congo had requested assistance to analyse its survey data on fertility, which IFORD had provided.

273. In the discussions which followed, it was felt that ECA should still take the initiative and continue to go to countries to identify needs since needs were at times poorly identified. It was observed that sometimes experts were occupied and it was not possible to get assistance. The secretariat appealed to participants to communicate their needs to ECA in advance so that necessary arrangements could be made to plan assistance. The secretariat also mentioned the need for countries to identify their needs and to make requests; and to build and improve the capability of local staff. Now that a number of countries had taken up family planning programmes, the secretariat felt that some work should be started to monitor and evaluate such programmes.

274. A question was raised as to whether ECA would provide financial assistance in conducting demographic surveys. In reply the secretariat indicated that ECA would assist in formulating a project request for UNFPA funding. Another question was whether ECA had publications on demographic surveys conducted in different countries. The secretariat indicated that some publications were obtained from member States and were available at ECA while other countries did not send them to ECA.

275. The observer from France informed the meeting of the technical assistance which France provided to some country programmes in Africa. Various forms of assistance in training in population and data processing were brought to the attention of the meeting by the observer from the United States Census Bureau. The assistance included the improvement of civil registration systems. Two sets of documents on 1980 World Census Programme were mentioned. One set covered cartography while the other one covered other census operations including analysis.

276. It was stated that the lack of information on census activities at ECA was due to delays in correspondence between ECA and member States. A suggestion was therefore made that ECA should liaise with UNFPA co-ordinators to get some information on census and survey activities. Assistance needed by some countries included experts to assist set up demographic analysis units in member States, assistance on migration studies and improvement of civil registration systems.

277. Finally, the secretariat assured participants that the secretariat would do whatever it could to assist member States and that the success would depend on the co-operation received from member States themselves.

Interagency collaboration and co-ordination in the implementation of programmes /agenda item 17(3)/

278. Efforts had been made to strengthen the relations and collaboration among United Nations bodies and agencies to implement the work programme. It was reported that population projections and other tasks were jointly undertaken by Headquarters, the Commission and agencies. More specifically ECA and ILO had started to organize joint national seminars on population and development with emphasis on employment, like the one held in Arusha and the one to be held in Conakry. ECA also collaborated with WHO, UNESCO, WFS and other agencies, including RIPS and IFORT.

Draft Statutes of the Regional Institutes for Population Studies at Accra and Yaounde /agenda item 17 (f)/

279. The Committee discussed at some length the articles of the new draft statutes of the two Regional Institutes and agreed on a set of statutes after amendments to the draft. However, the Committee could not reach unanimous agreement on some clauses and therefore decided to transmit the various proposals to the Conference of Ministers for decision. The disputed clauses were as follows:

1. Article IV, Paragraph 1 (a)

280. The representative of Ghana suggested that the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa should not automatically be the Chairman of the Governing Councils of the institutes. Each Council should elect its own Chairman from among member States by rotation. The Committee itself was undecided and the representative of Ghana decided to reserve her position.

2. Article IV, Paragraph 1 (c)

281. First, there was a proposal that, instead of individuals being selected by the Conference of Ministers in their own capacities as members of the Governing Councils of the institutes, the Conference of Ministers should elect twelve member States as members of such Councils and leave the countries elected to choose the individuals to represent them. That was accepted by some members of the Committee.

282. On the other hand, another group suggested that since all the countries were expected to contribute financially towards the support of each institute, all the countries served by each institute should be members of its Governing Council.

283. The two suggestions could not be reconciled. The two alternatives were therefore included in the draft to allow the Conference of Ministers to decide which should be adopted.

3. Financing of the Institutes

284. On financing of the institutes, the delegate of Cameroon took note with appreciation of the principle of financing by all the countries served by the institutes. However he pointed out that account should be taken of the facilities provided by the host countries.

4. Article XI, Fiancial Resources of the Institute

285. The representative of Ghana informed the Committee of her Government's concern about the proposed method of collecting funds for the institutes after their regionalization. The fear was that funds might be inadequate, if some Governments failed to pay their contributions as expected. So far, her Government had been providing the counterpart funds and financing had presented no problems at the institute being hosted by Ghana. However non-payment of contributions by some governments, such as had been experienced by other regional institutes, could hamper the future of the institutes.

The anxiety was shared by some other members of the Committee. The Committee decided that the Conference of Ministers should be informed of the concern and asked to devise ways and means to safeguard the future of the institutes and allay the fears expressed by the representative of Ghana.

Work programme in population (agenda item 19)

286. The secretariat explained the guiding principles of the 1980/1981 work programme and projections up to 1983. It drew participants' attention to the need for a coherent and more concise programme with a more limited number of projects in order to ensure that they were successful. It also informed participants of new financial constraints and difficulties in obtaining additional posts to enable the secretariat to implement the approved programme properly and respond to requests from member States.

287. The programme was divided into three subprogrammes which dealt with population policies, population dynamics and training and research respectively. Those headings were used to describe the programme in operational terms and ensure follow-up and evaluation.

288. Some participants raised questions about the implementation of projects in collaboration with other agencies and in particular the Sahel Institute and about the scope and arrangements for training middle-level cadres in the population field.

289. The secretariat provided the necessary explanations and stressed in particular the role of the training institutes (IFORD and RIPS) as specially placed partners in the training effort. The programme was accepted as far as its form was concerned.

Any other business :

1. Proposal to establish West African Council for Population and Development Research

290. The secretariat introduced an item on the creation of a West African Council for Population and Development Research as an initiative of the Niamey MULPOC. The secretariat informed the Committee that the issue had been discussed by the Committee of experts and the Council of Ministers of the Niamey MULPOC at their recent meetings in February 1980.

291. The idea was that the Niamey MULPOC should take the initiative to assist in the establishment of a non-Governmental Council which would co-ordinate and direct research in the West African subregion on population and developments with funds from donor agencies. The Council would ensure that funds from donor agencies for such research within the region were being used for research which would benefit the countries.

292. The Committee was informed that the Council of Ministers of the Niamey MULPOC decided that the ECA secretariat should assist the ECA Population Division to undertake further study on the creation of the council. In the light of the fundings of the study it would then be the responsibility of the Council of Ministers (Niamey MULPOC) to determine the appropriate steps to be taken.

293. The secretariat informed the Committee that the issue was being raised because during the discussion at the MULPOC meetings, it had been suggested that the issue might be raised at the Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers for an expert view. However, the Committee considered that once a decision had been taken by the Council of Ministers of the MULPOC concerned the Committee could not change that decision. The secretariat therefore had to undertake the study recommended by the Niamey MULPOC Council of Ministers.

294. One delegate asked whether the secretariat was thinking of establishing the same type of council in the other MULPOC areas. The secretariat answered that the initiative came from a group of people from the West African subregion and that the secretariat's view was that, if all worked out well with the West African initiative, the secretariat might consider taking the same step in the other MULPOC areas.

2. Matters arising from the twentieth session of the United Nations Population Commission

295. The Director of the United Nations Population Division, New York, referred to the statement he had made at the joint session of Demographers and Statisticians about the recommendations of the Twentieth session of the United Nations Population Commission held in 1979. Of specific interest to the Committee was the proposal to hold a World Population Conference probably in 1984. Also of particular interest to the African region were two of the topics for the four pre-conference technical meetings. They were health and mortality and population distribution. One of those meetings might be held in Africa. The view had also been expressed that the 1984 Conference should be held in a developing country.

296. In the discussions the wish was expressed that an African country might offer to host the World Population Conference. It was also thought that it would be a good follow-up to the second African Population Conference planned for 1983. In that regard the Director of the United Nations Population Division said that the planned African Population Conference might be able to discuss the papers for the World Conference since they were likely to be ready by the time of the African Conference.

PLANNERS AND DEMOGRAPHERS

(JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING)

Population in African development (agenda item 18)

297. The secretariat summarized the paper on Population interrelationships in developing planning and their implications in Africa (E/CN.14/PSD.1/25). The aim of the paper was to review some aspects of the role that population variables could play in the development process and their implications.

298. In that connexion the secretariat pointed out that a study of development plans had shown that population variables had not been given much attention especially in the 1960s. Although there had been some improvement in the plans of the 1970s there was no doubt that a lot still remained to be done. The main reasons given for that were the non-availability of the relevant data and the lack of attention given to the analysis of the available data; the non-availability of trained personnel to undertake both the collection and analysis of the data; the tendency of the planner to concentrate mainly on economic variables in planning; the tendency in Africa to place too much emphasis on total population and crude densities and the tendency for the planner and demographer to work in isolation.

299. In order to remedy the situation there was a need to take action. The secretariat's paper thus drew attention to the African strategy in the Third United Nations Development Decade in relation to a number of demographic problems in the region. Finally the need for courage to embark on radical reforms in the health, education, food production and employment services and policies was called for as a means of overcoming the problems that demographic trends could pose for African countries.

300. In the discussions that followed the secretariat's paper was generally welcomed as laying bare some of the facts and pointing out the problems that demographic trends could pose for the region and calling for action for their solution. It was felt that the problems were real and posed a great challenge especially when seen in relation to the economic prospects revealed in the projections and perspectives presented to the planners. Some participants however felt that the approach adopted in the paper was unidimentional and did not deal with all variables, economic, social and so forth. It was pointed out that the paper dwelt too much on the adverse effects of population trends and did not offer enough solutions to the problems. The secretariat pointed out however that the paper was not meant to cover all aspects of the issue but only to illustrate the relationships between population variables and socio-economic development and their implications for some sectors.

301. The Conference felt that the solution to the problem was mainly economic and that rapid economic development was the answer. The need for social reforms including land reform and more equitable distribution of wealth was also stressed. It was suggested that African countries should embark on vigorous integrated rural development programmes

which would aim at providing services like health, education and improved transport and communications for the rural area. These would help to improve the living conditions of the majority of the population and stem the excessive rural-urban migration which was a contributory factor to the inability to produce enough food in Africa. It was further pointed out that urbanization was not in itself detrimental to development and was bound to continue. What was detrimental about it in Africa was the concentration of an appreciably high proportion of the population in the capital cities and the virtual non-existence of other sizable towns. It was suggested that efforts should also be made to enable the cities to cope with their increasing population as far as services were concerned.

302. It was also suggested that the paper should have also shown the implications of population trends in terms of Governments expenditure. The secretariat pointed out that that was exactly what planners were expected to do in their development plans as a means of making policy makers aware of the financial implications of population trends and the problems they posed for rapid socio-economic development.

303. On employment it was suggested that educational systems should be skill- and career-oriented to make the population more useful and employable. There was also the need to transform the rural sector into modern economy in order to generate income and improve upon the quality of life.

304. The need for the use of demographic variables in development planning was stressed by all. It was therefore recommended that efforts should be made to collect the relevant data including the improvement of vital statistics to enable planners to make use of them. It was also agreed that demographers should provide the much needed interpretation of demographic data to facilitate the formulation of appropriate policies for planning. Another recommendation was that appropriate machinery should be established to ensure proper collaboration among demographers and planners in order to ensure that demographic variables would be given the attention needed in development planning. The training of personnel to ensure the collection and analysis of demographic data for planning was also stressed. The secretariat informed participants that it was planning, in the implementation of its work programme during the 1980s to assist countries to establish special units to ensure the integration of population variables in development plans as recommended by the World Population Plan of Action.

305. On other institutional and social problems that posed problems for socio-economic development, it was agreed that there was the need for radical measures to reform the health, educational, employment and other social services and policies in order to make the majority of the population benefit from them. There was the need for industrialization and the proper choice between labour intensive and capital intensive enterprises at the appropriate time to counteract unemployment. The promotion of agriculture as a means of increasing rural incomes and food production and reducing unemployment in the rural areas was also stressed.

306. Finally, it was recommended that the Population Division and the Socio-Economic Research and Planning Division should collaborate in the review of the relationship between population and development planning in order to produce a more coherent and comprehensive analysis of the issues involved.

STATISTICS AND DEMOGRAPHY (JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING)

Demographic and social statistics and analysis (Agenda item 20)

(a) 1980 population and housing censuses

307. Two background papers were introduced under this agenda item: Progress Report on the 1980-Round of Population and Housing Censuses in Africa (E/CN.14/PSD.1/26) and Report of the Working Group on Recommendations for the 1980 Population and Housing Censuses in Africa (E/CN.14/PSD.1/26/Add.1). In his introductory remarks, a representative of the secretariat indicated that the census programme should be considered together with the African Household Survey Capability Programme as part of ECA's efforts to stress the integrated approach to data collection. He indicated that population and housing censuses had been carried out in all African countries with the exception of Ethiopia, Chad. and Zaire in all three of which there are projects to conduct censuses as soon as possible.

308. The representative of the secretariat referred to the current composition of ECA's Regional Advisory Service in Demographic Statistics (RASDS) which is as follows: The Deputy Chief of the Statistics Division (who is not part of RASDS but is the Chief of the Censuses and Surveys Advisory Section of the Statistics Division and is thus in charge of the team), one Demographic Statistician for English-speaking countries, one Demographic Statistician for French-speaking countries, one Sampling Adviser, one Data Processing Adviser and one Associate Statistician. In addition there is a post for a Census Cartographer which has yet to be filled. He also stated that there were two Civil Registration Specialists yet to be appointed in RASDS who can also be used on census assignments. The Population Division has also two Regional Advisers in demography who can assist countries in the field of analysis.

309. In the discussions which followed, one delegate referred to the use of a sample census as a means of overcoming problems of finance, manpower shortage, and prevailing political conditions which tend to affect the accuracy of census figures. In reply the representative of the secretariat restated the advantages of 100 per cent coverage on basic items in censuses and mentioned that the problem of inflation of census figures will not necessarily be overcome through the mechanism of a sample census. Sampling had its own role within the general framework of a population and housing census.

310. Another delegate questioned the usefulness of some of the copies recommended by the Working Group for investigation in censuses, namely: "place where found at time of census". "place of usual residence" and "births to every woman aged ... years or more during last 12 months", etc. The representative of the secretariat explained the use of each item. The first determines the de facto population, the second the de jure and the third makes it possible by the application of certain well-known techniques to determine fertility rates.

311. The next set of questions related to the best use which can be made of sampling in connexion with censuses. Three basic approaches were mentioned: built-in samples post-enumeration surveys as an integral part of the census programme and separate inquiries as part of the African Household Survey Capability Programme. The representative of the secretariat explained the advantages and disadvantages of each approach. With emphasis on small area and district statistics, the built-in sample (whether it is every n^{th} enumeration area or every k^{th} household) provides an easy way of obtaining reasonable estimates at a suitable level of disaggregation. However, it needs great care and control to obtain successful results.

312. A delegate referred to paragraph 64 of the Working Group's Report and asked whether the Report of the IASS Workshop on sampling techniques had been circulated. The representative of the secretariat said it had not but promised to find out what had happened to the report.

313. The representatives of the USA gave an account of assistance available in the field of training, using Popstan Manuals and assistance in the use of and help in installing software packages obtainable from USAID such as CENTS, CCCENTS, CONCOR and programmes for population analyses and projections.

314. The representative of U.K. also described assistance given by his country to Sudan, Kenya and Malawi in the census field. He emphasized that with a lot of data generated from the 1970 and 1980 round of population and housing censuses, greater attention should now be focussed on evaluation and analysis by ECA. This was important if maximum benefit was to be derived from the collected data.

315. The representative of Sweden made a statement in connexion with assistance available to 12 African countries.

316. The Director of RIPS referred to the training in demographic analysis available at his institute.

317. Finally, the Director of the UN Population Division in the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, New York, took the opportunity to inform the Joint Committee that ECOSOC at its Spring session of 1979 requested the Population Commission at its twenty-first session to advise it on the possibility of holding World Population Conference probably in 1984 to assess the progress made since 1974 in the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action. He stated that many changes can already be noticed in the demographic trends as well as in the perception and formulation of population policies by Governments. If some trends have unmistakably taken a positive turn, emerging matters of

concern are also noticeable, mainly in the mortality component which is improving at a slower pace than had been anticipated and the geographical distribution of population which is often not in consonance with the patterns of regional development strategies.

318. Reinforcement of the decisions taken in Bucharest should be accompanied by a new order of priorities. A new enlargement of the notion of population question is expected from this new World Population Conference which will deal with qualitative aspects and population distribution policies. The Director mentioned that the present state of preparation of the conference envisages a set of four scientific symposia which will precede the discussions among policy-makers at the main conference. It was hoped that the conference will be mainly financed by extra-budgetary resources; UNFPA has already been approached and has responded favourably. It is hoped that the Conference will be held in a developing country.

319. The meeting then adopted the draft Report of the Working Group on Recommendations on the 1980 Population and Housing Censuses.

b) Other Data Collection and Analysis, including the World Fertility Survey

320. There was one background paper for this agenda item: General Report on Demographic Data Collection, Processing and Analysis in Africa (E/CN.14/PSD.1/27). In introducing the item, a representative of the secretariat reviewed the main demographic data collection mechanisms and their applications in Africa: civil registration, population registers, population censuses, surveys and dual record systems. He referred to the institution of population registers in the United Republic of Tanzania and Ethiopia and suggested that experimental work should be done on them to see whether they could be used for demographic analysis. He referred also to topics investigated in each mode of data collection.

321. With respect to data processing he referred to the need for the subject-matter and data processing specialists to work hand in hand in preparing meaningful edit specifications. He mentioned a number of specific examples where failure to do this led to serious problems in the data processing phase of censuses and surveys.

322. The importance of data evaluation and analysis was stressed. The representative of the secretariat then referred to the experiences of ECA and AIDS in assisting African countries to analyse their census data.

323. The availability of census and survey data has encouraged ECA to start the development of a Demographic and Social Statistics Data Base (DSSDB) as an integral part of its statistical data base. The main components of DSSDB are, as at present determined, Population General, Economic Activity and Status, Education, Vital Statistics, Fertility and Migration.

324. After this introduction, the Acting Project Director of the World Fertility Survey then reported on the progress of the WFS. A total of 41 developing countries were currently participating in the programme, of which 11 were African. A further 3, all African, were currently making arrangements for participation. While 7 African countries had now reached or passed the field work stage, none had yet published their first country report. Technical assistance was available at all stages of the survey, generally in-country but also occasionally by bringing national staff to the London headquarters for training. Within the last year the WFS had made substantial advances in software development and could now offer a number of useful package programmes. WFS assistance in data analysis had also expanded rapidly: a wide range of manuals, illustrative analyses and technical bulletins had been prepared and would now be available to African countries as they approached the analysis stage of their surveys. Standard country data tapes were now being produced rapidly and 12 were already available at the end of 1979. Comparative cross-country analysis had started. WFS would co-operate with ECA in the comparative analysis of data from the African region.

325. A world conference of the WFS was being organized in London from 7 - 11 July 1980. This would bring together technicians and policy-makers from all the WFS participant countries as well as a large number of experts on fertility. The Conference would report methods and results and would aim to bring the findings to the attention of ministers and senior officials. The future of the WFS had been much discussed, including such options as continuation of the current programme to cover countries not yet included, repetition of the survey in countries which had already done the first round, and possible extension of the WFS approach to other subject-matter fields. The decision depended essentially on the funding agencies, which would in turn be largely guided by the response of countries as expressed at the WFS Conference.

326. It was pointed out that simultaneous participation in the WFS and the African Household Survey Capability Programme was in no way incompatible.

327. A general discussion then followed. In response to a query it was affirmed that both ECA and WFS could provide assistance to countries to analyse their WFS data. The question was raised of the need for WFS country advisers to consult their headquarters in London. Should they not be qualified to give all necessary advice themselves? It was pointed out, however, that WFS involved a vast co-operative effort worldwide and this inevitably implied frequent communication between countries and headquarters. No individual adviser could be expected to possess the range of experience available among the headquarters staff.

328. The representative of OCAM referred to contributions being made by his organisation to assist in the improvement and expansion of civil registration and vital statistics collection systems in the OCAM countries. He referred to the manual prepared by OCAM/UDEAC with ECA's assistance and mentioned the generous assistance being given to OCAM by VISTAT. The representative of the secretariat replying to comments on civil registration welcomed the collaboration which exists between OCAM/UDEAC and ECA and hoped that co-ordination of their activities would help to avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts.

329. With respect to data processing, there were questions concerning relations which should exist between the data processing adviser and the staff of the statistical office. The representative of the secretariat explained that the subject-matter specialists and the UN data processing adviser should co-operate but where the latter makes such co-operation impossible, the UN Resident Representative should be brought into the picture.

330. The representative of the United Kingdom stressed the importance of experimentation in data collection. He referred to an investigation carried out by a UK expert in the ESCAP region on the relative merits of the different demographic data collection mechanisms and suggested that ECA should obtain a copy of this report for dissemination if necessary.

331. The representative of the USA referred to a project on Civil Registration in the National Centre for Health Statistics funded by USAID and also to the work of Population Laboratories in the field of demographic data collection. He drew attention to the ESCAP questionnaire on migration and indicated that although such migration questionnaires need to be country-specific there was a lot to be learnt from the ESCAP model. The representative of the secretariat informed the Committee that ECA had a copy of the ESCAP questionnaire and had already noted some of its deficiencies.

332. Finally the representative of Sweden thought that considering Sweden's expertise in the field of population registers it might be a suitable area for Swedish bilateral assistance. In general, the Swedish Government is very likely to accept requests for statistical assistance from the Swedish programme countries in Africa, provided the governments include statistics within their country frames for Swedish bilateral assistance.

FINAL PLENARY MEETING

Verbal Reports by Chairmen of Committee Meetings (Agenda item 21)

333 The Chairmen of the three committees presented verbal reports on the work of the committee meetings.

Proposals for submission to the forthcoming African Economic Summit through the Conference of Ministers (Agenda item 22)

334 At the conclusion of its discussions, the Conference recommended the following proposals for considerations by the African Economic Summit:

Planning

(a) The poor performance of the African region in the 1970s and the bleak prospects in the 1980s if past policies and trends continued is a cause of great concern. Therefore, the planned scenario proposed by the ECA secretariat for the African region in the 1980s which is in line with resolution 332 (XIV) of the fifth meeting of the Conference of Ministers/fourteenth session of the Commission and endorsed by the OAU Summit at its last session held in Monrovia in 1979 is sound and challenging.

(b) It is necessary to put into practice in the 1980s the concept of collective self-reliance at regional level especially in the field of self-sufficiency in food, trade, industry and in financing development. Every effort should be made in promoting regional co-operation and physical integration through the rapid implementation of the United Nations Transport and Communication Decade for Africa, especially for landlocked African countries.

(c) For the 1980s, emphasis should be given to the development of agriculture and agro-based industries, development of socio-economic infrastructure, African co-operation and eradication of mass poverty, unemployment, underemployment and the satisfaction of basic needs.

(d) African countries should accord high priority to a complete and in-depth survey of their potentials in natural resources especially in agriculture, mining, energy, water and environment.

(e) In agriculture, individual African countries are urged to draw up food plans to facilitate the attainment of collective self-sufficiency in food production: efforts would have to be directed towards land reform, appropriate mechanization, remunerative prices for agricultural products, establishment of efficient storage facilities, distribution and processing of agricultural products, better utilization of human resources, and development of scientific research centres related to adequate extension services.

(f) For industry and particularly for large-scale industries (e.g. iron and steel, metal, chemical and petro-chemical industries)capacity utilization studies are needed as a basis for national resource mobilization and allocation for such projects at sub-regional and regional level. Similarly, also it is necessary to identify types of import substitution industries which can best be undertaken at multinational levels.

(g) In the energy sector, modelling work should be undertaken on the supply and demand of energy in the African region and short-term and long-term projections be carried out so as to enable the building-up of a regional energy programme in the field of production, consumption and conservation.

(h) Africa should establish a regional system for domestic resource mobilization for development and, as a strating point for such system, it is proposed that appropriate mechanisms be established for mobilizing and channelling resources from surplus African countries - particularly the oil-exporting surplus countries - to the deficit countries and especially the African least developed countries.

(i) Action should be taken to reinforce measures to redress drought and desertification.

Statistics

(j) As a matter of urgency, African countries must strengthen their statistical infrastructures as a basis for effective policy-making and planning. In this connexion, they are urged to formulate statistical development programmes and these should be included in national development plans. These programmes should incorporate a list of data requirements in line with its needs and priority.

(k) In order to mobilize external resources for the implementation of the African Household Survey Capability Programme, the 1980 round of Population and Housing Censuses and the System of National Accounts, African Governments should re-affirm their priorities in these programmes and provide the necessary counterpart financial support.

(l) Each Government should institute appropriate mechanisms for the evaluation and analysis of data. These mechanisms should ensure proper linkages between data collectors, analysts and users.

(m) It is desirable that a statistical data base for the storage and retrieval of information be established in individual countries.

(n) Steps should be taken by Governments to slow down the brain drain from national statistical offices.

Population

(o) Appropriate machinery should be established where necessary to ensure the greater integration of population variables in development planning, bearing in mind the expected doubling of the regional population between 1975 and 2000 and the impact on economic planning and development.

(p) African countries should attach more importance to analysis of relevant demographic data from both the 1970 and 1980 rounds of censuses and other demographic surveys.

(q) Nationals must be trained to undertake the collection and analysis of demographic data. In this regard support should be given to the existing training centres.

(r) Better collaboration is needed between demographers, planners and statisticians in their work at the national level and mechanisms should be deliberately established for this purpose.

(s) The current excessive rural-urban migration calls for the establishment of a programme of planned distribution and re-distribution of population, tied to policies and programming for human settlements and integrated rural development.

(t) The current levels of fertility and mortality are of concern. The resultant high rates of growth have implications for meeting the needs of a majority of the population.

Other business (Agenda item 23)

335 The Conference noted that it would not be practicable to discuss the date and venue of its next session due to the need for co-ordination with arrangements for other meetings.

336 The hope was expressed that Zimbabwe would be able to attend the second session of the Conference.

Provisional agenda for the second session of the Joint Conference (Agenda item 24)

337. The Conference adopted the following provisional agenda for its next session:

Plenary meeting

1. Opening address
2. Election of officers
3. Adoption of the agenda
4. Matters arising from the sixth and seventh meetings of the ECA Conference of Ministers and other UN bodies
5. Matters arising from the first session of the Joint Conference
6. Technical assistance in the fields of planning, statistics and demography
7. Review of development patterns among African countries, 1971-1981
8. The essentials of development planning
9. Population trends and policies and their relationship to some aspects of development
10. The measurement and analysis of poverty in African countries
11. The ECA statistical data base and its use for socio-economic analysis.

Planning committee

12. Election of officers

13. Sectoral and employment projections for the ECA region

14. Design and applicability of socio-economic indicators in the African context

15. Measures for effective co-ordination of development activities between the public and private sectors in a number of African countries

16. Analysis and evaluation of the impact of tariff and non-tariff protection on industrialisation in Africa

17. Institute for Economic Development and Planning

18. Programme of work in development planning, projections and policies.

Statistics committee

19. Election of officers

20. Progress of national data processing capabilities

21. Report on the Statistical Training Programme for Africa in the context of national statistical organization, staffing and technical assistance

22. Infrastructure for economic statistics

23. Programme for the improvement of price statistics

24. 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics

25. Transport and communications statistics

26. National accounts and related data in least developed and newly independent countries

27. African Household Survey Capability Programme: Progress Report and examination of analytical requirements

28. Report on other statistical activities and examination of future work programme

Demography committee

29. Election of officers

30. Matters arising from UN and ECA meetings

31. Report on activities of the secretariat, 1980-1982

32. Training and research in the population field

33. Programme of work in population activities

Planning and Statistics (Joint committee meeting)

34. National accounts and their uses

Statistics and Demography (Joint committee meeting)

35. Demography and related statistics: Progress Report on the 1980 censuses, demographic surveys and civil registration.

Demography and Planning (Joint committee meeting)

36. Status of population policies in development planning in Africa

Plenary meeting

37. Review of committee deliberations and summary of main conclusions

38. Other business

39. Consideration of the draft provisional agenda for the third session of the Joint Conference

40. Report of the Joint Conference to the ECA Conference of Ministers.

Report of the Conference

338 On 2 April 1980 the Conference unanimously adopted the present report to the ECA Conference of Ministers on the work of its first session.

E/CN.14/PSD.1/20
E/CN.14/714

ANNEX I

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON IDEP

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling its resolutions 25(II) of 22 February 1963, 102(XII) of 23 February 1974, 324(XXII) of 1 March 1977 and 351(XIV) of 27 March 1979, on the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP),

Noting

(a) That, by decision 34/414 of 20 December 1973 the General Assembly of the United Nations approved the Statute of IDEP as adopted by resolution 32/2(XIII) and revised in the light of the proposals made by the Secretary General on the advice of the Fifth Committee of the United Nations.

(b) That, at the meeting of the UNDP Resident Representatives of the Africa Region held in Kbabane in January 1980, it was recommended that in order to facilitate training at IDEP the appropriate Governments, Departments or Ministries of African Governments should work together with UNDP Resident Representatives to integrate fellowships for study at IDEP with National Programmes financed by the UNDP National Indicative Planning Figures.

(c) That, at its 21st meeting held in Addis Ababa, 21-25 March 1980, the Governing Council of IDEP taking note of the recommendation of the meeting of the Resident Representatives of the Africa Region addressed to the Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers, for the Conference to prepare a resolution for submission to the Conference of Ministers urging the member states of ECA to integrate within their National Indicative Planning Figures the financing of fellowships for their nationals to study at IDEP.

(d) That, at its 21st meeting, the Governing Council of IDEP also noted that the contributions collected from the member States of IDEP for the year 1979 amounted to 699,327 dollars in respect of a commitment of 1 million dollars, and that the outstanding arrears as of 31 December 1979 amounted to 1.7 million dollars and that the Governing Council recommended that the Conference of Ministers should pass a resolution urging the member States of IDEP to fulfil their financial commitments to IDEP.

1. Requests member States to consider the awarding of scholarships for study at IDEP which may be financed out of their National Indicative Planning Figures.

2. Appeals to the member States concerned to pay all their outstanding assessed contributions to IDEP by the end of 1980.

3. Urges member States to pay their annual contributions regularly and on time.

ANNEX II

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED FOR ADOPTION BY THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS

1. Priority population programmes of ECA:

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1672(LII) of 2 June 1972 on population and development in which all Member States of the United Nations were urged, among other things, to take such steps as might be necessary to improve demographic statistics, research and planning machinery needed for the development of population policies and programmes,

Taking note of the recommendations of the Regional Post-World Population Conference Consultations held in Lusaka in April 1972, which called upon African countries to give attention to the reduction of mortality levels, the relationship between population and development, the integration of population variables including its composition, distribution, growth, fertility, mortality and changes in the population in socio-economic development planning,

Taking note of the report of the third session of the Conference of African Demographers held in Dakar, Senegal from 29 to 31 February 1979, 1/

Recalling its resolution 278(XII) of 27 February 1974 on integrated programmes on population as well as its resolution 293(X) of 19 February 1971 on the establishment of the demographic training centres and the preparations of case studies on population and social development,

Further recalling its resolution 500(XIV) of 27 March 1979 on priority population programmes of ECA,

Taking note of the recommendations of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities Evaluation Mission to the Commission and some countries of the region, and the decisions taken by the interagency meeting organized by the Fund in Nairobi in February 1979 on the Fund's strategy for funding intercountry programmes in the field of population in Africa.

1/ E/CN.14/779

Further taking note of the report and recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting on Fertility and Mortality Levels, Patterns and Trends in Africa and their Policy Implications held in Monrovia, Liberia, from 26 November to 1 December 1979, 2/

Expresses concern about persistent delays in the processing of data from the 1970 round of censuses and surveys which have generally led to lengthy delays in the analysis and use of data,

Appreciates the assistance extended to the region by bilateral and multilateral sources for data processing and other population activities,

1. Invites the Executive Secretary to undertake an in-depth study of the integration of population variables in development planning in Africa for the second session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers;

2. Requests the Executive Secretary to assist Member States of the African region to analyse data from censuses and surveys and promote comparative analyses of results;

3. Requests the Executive Secretary to mount a programme of studies to evolve suitable socio-economic indicators which would assist Member States to monitor development at the national and local levels;

4. Requests the Executive Secretary to undertake studies in areas of particular concern to the region including in particular infertility and subfertility, mortality, cause of death among children below five years of age and migration;

5. Invites the Executive Secretary to organise expert group meetings and workshops on the analysis of census and other demographic data;

6. Requests the Executive Secretary to intensify the Commission's activities in the field of population information dissemination and documentation.

2/ E/CN.14/POD.1/23/Add.1

2. Regional training in population studies in Africa

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling its resolution 25 (X) of 19 February 1974, which, among other things, invited the Executive Secretary to speed up the establishment of subregional centres for the training of demographers,

Recalling further its resolution 27 (XII) of 27 February 1976, which noted with satisfaction the actual establishment and operation of the Regional Institute for Population Studies in Accra and the Institut de formation et de recherche démographiques in Yaoundé and the continuation of the Cairo Demographic Centre,

Recalling also its resolution 367(XIV) of 27 March 1979 on regional training in population studies in Africa,

Notes with satisfaction the progress made on the implementation of the decentralization to the Commission of the management of the Regional Institute for Population Studies in Accra, Ghana, and Institut de formation et de recherche démographiques in Yaoundé, United Republic of Cameroon, in line with General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977,

1. Invites Member States to make more effective use of the facilities at the afore-mentioned institutes;

2. Requests Member States, in pursuit of the programme of regionalization, to provide adequate financial support towards the running of these regional institutes and to participate fully in their governing councils;

3. Requests the Executive Secretary to promote middle-level training in population studies within existing statistical training programmes in the region.